

WINTER 1959-60

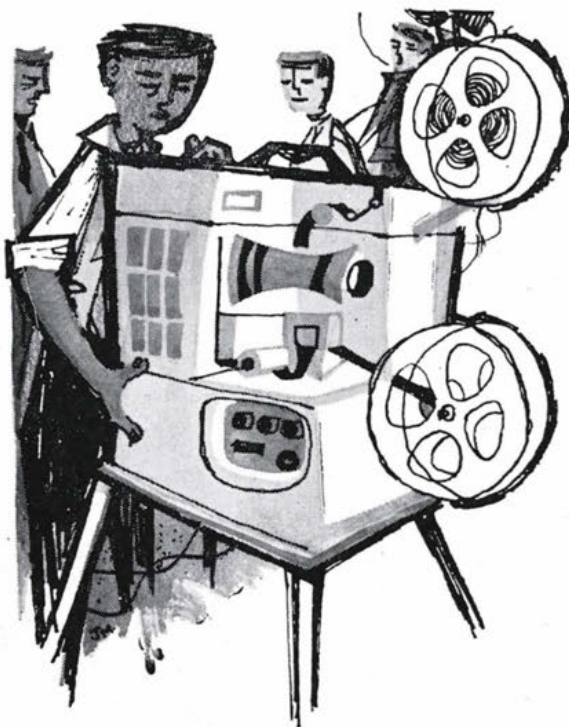
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# SIGHT AND SOUND

The Film Quarterly

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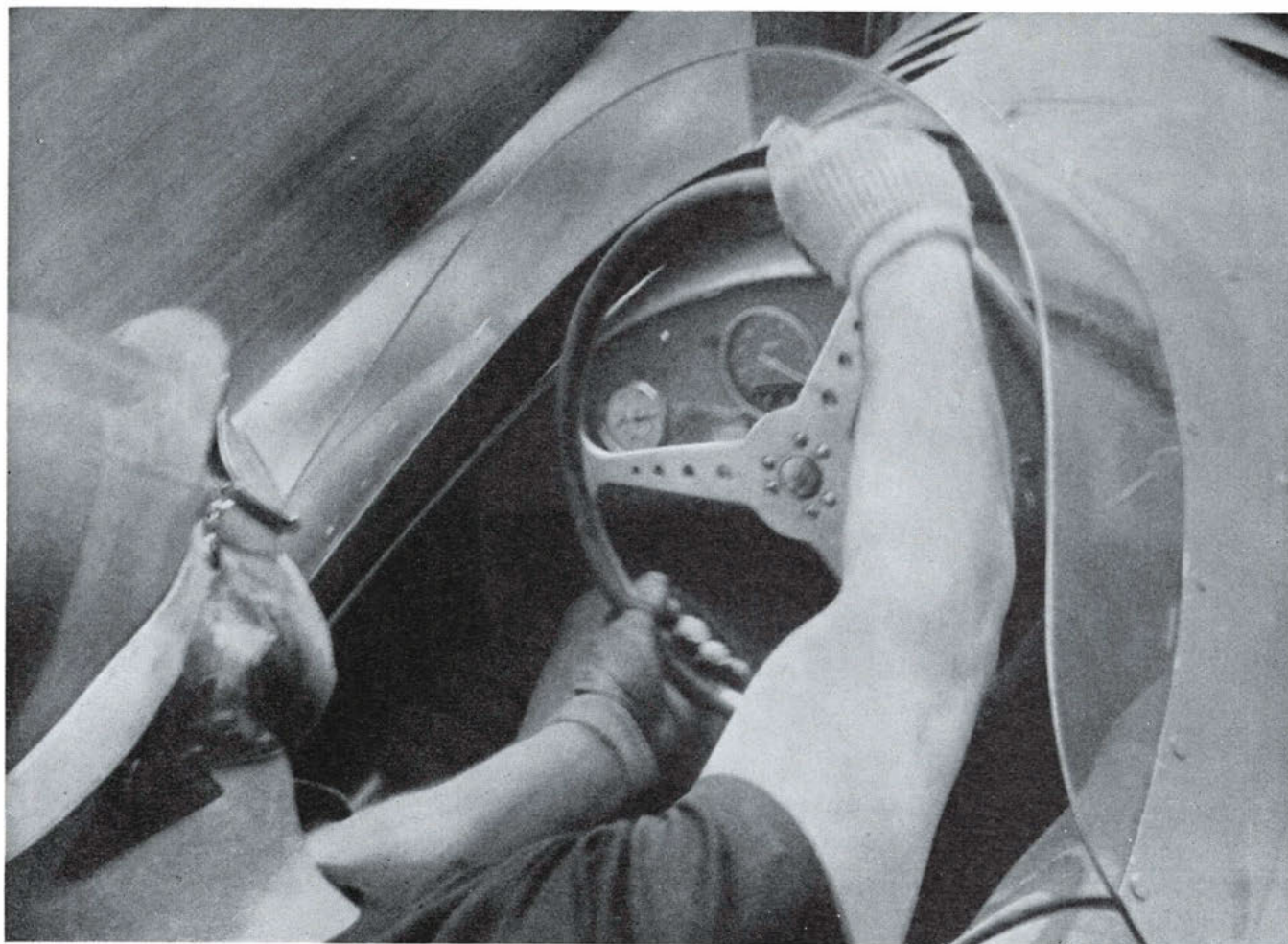
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# SIGHT AND SOUND

## The International Film Quarterly

VOLUME 29 No. 1 WINTER 1959/60

### contents

#### features

- 3 The Front Page
- 9 London Festival: JOHN GILLETT, DEREK HILL
- 20 In the Picture
- 24 *The Fugitive Kind* and *The Entertainer*
- 41 Rediscovery (4): Buster: DAVID ROBINSON
- 50 Correspondence
- 52 Current Film Guide

#### articles

- 4 Into the Sixties:  
PENELOPE HOUSTON and DUNCAN CROW
- 12 Alain Resnais and *Hiroshima mon Amour*:  
LOUIS MARCORELLES, HENRI COLPI, RICHARD ROUD
- 18 Le Testament d'Orphée: DEREK PROUSE
- 26 The Teenage Rave: PETER JOHN DYER
- 31 *Yesterday* and *Tomorrow*: New Hungarian Films:  
ROBERT VAS
- 44 Putting it on Film: PHILIP PURSER

#### film reviews

- 35 Our Man in Havana: PENELOPE HOUSTON
- 36 The Horse Soldiers: DAVID ROBINSON
- 37 The Savage Eye *and* Crime and Punishment, U.S.A.:  
ERIC RHODE
- 37 On the Beach: PENELOPE HOUSTON
- 38 The Girl Rosemarie: ROBERT VAS
- 39 This is the B.B.C.: DEREK HILL
- 39 Persons Unknown: JOHN GILLETT
- 39 Vicious Circle: ERIC RHODE
- 40 That Kind of Woman: RICHARD ROUD
- 40 The Royal Ballet: PETER BRINSON
- 40 Expresso Bongo: PETER JOHN DYER

#### book reviews

- 47 The Japanese Film: DEREK PROUSE
- 47 Groucho and Me: PENELOPE GILLIATT
- 48 Alexander Korda: BRENDA DAVIES
- 48 Film and Television in Education for Teaching:  
BRIAN GROOMBRIDGE
- 49 Film: Book 1: DEREK HILL

ON THE COVER: Emanuelle Riva in *Hiroshima mon Amour*.

SIGHT AND SOUND is an independent critical magazine sponsored and published by the British Film Institute. It is not an organ for the expression of official British Film Institute policy; signed articles represent the views of their authors, and not necessarily those of the Editorial Board.

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# THE FRONT PAGE

THE LAST YEAR OF A DECADE should seem to look forward, not merely to round off; and, in the cinema, 1959 has emphatically been this kind of year. From Britain, two stimulating, strongly contemporary films from new and independent talents, *Look Back in Anger* and *Room at the Top*, and a documentary, *We Are the Lambeth Boys*, to crown Free Cinema's achievement; from France, *Hiroshima mon Amour*, *Les Quatre Cents Coups*, and the whole stir and tension of a new generation on the move: these alone would give us enough to cheer about.

In fact, the annual process of list-making becomes more than usually difficult because so many of 1959's best achievements have yet to reach the commercial cinemas. *Hiroshima mon Amour*, the year's most dazzling experiment, arrives in London early in January; and one hopes its lyricism can survive the hazards of sub-titling an exceptionally difficult text. But there is no news yet that Ray's *The World of Apu*, Buñuel's *Nazarin*, Truffaut's *Les Quatre Cents Coups*, the outstanding trio from the third and most successful London Festival, have been acquired for distribution. And it would be almost too much to hope that distributors might interest themselves in three fascinating but distinctly esoteric pictures—Ozu's *Higanbana*, Ichikawa's *Conflagration*, Wojciech Has's *Farewells*—also introduced at this festival.

Our distributors too often keep us waiting; and three of the finest foreign releases of 1959—Kurosawa's *Living*, with its boldly independent subject and style, the elegant Hungarian *A Sunday Romance* and Antonioni's coolly distinguished *Le Amiche*—are far from being new films. Even *Mon Oncle*, Tati's most polished comedy and a deserved box-office success when finally shown, had to wait for more than a year, allegedly because of the extravagant commercial claims made by its French distributors. We have been kept more up to date, though, with Wajda's *Ashes and Diamonds*, a film full of baroque elaboration, the strain and clamour of an over-reaching talent, and with Bergman's *The Face*, a sleight-of-hand exercise mainly memorable for the effectiveness, and the intellectual impudence, of its conclusion. Bergman has been all over the place in 1959: sustaining the National Film Theatre's ambitious Swedish season, which more or less settled into its stride as a Bergman festival, keeping several specialised theatres crowded, and—on a visit to London—showing a calmness and humour which did a good deal to undermine some of the more forbidding aspects of the Bergman legend.

The excitements of 1959 (and there have been plenty of these, not least from our own cinema) have come mainly from the young and the adventurous, from directors able to communicate a passionate concern about the medium they are using. By contrast, Hollywood's best films have shown a sort of elder-statesman sobriety. Ford returns to the U.S. cavalry for the stirring and affectionate *The Horse Soldiers*; Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* shows what supreme professionalism can

still do with a spies-and-chase fantasy; Capra makes a good-natured comeback with *A Hole in the Head*; and *Gigi*, the year's most traditional musical, appeals not only through the built-in nostalgia of its theme but through the flashes which take one back to Minnelli's livelier inventions of a few years ago. The veterans are still in vigorous form. It is for the younger Hollywood talents that 1959 has been rather a bleak year. Certainly a film like the much discussed *The Savage Eye*, for all that it set the drums beating at Edinburgh, suggests a ferocious disgust as the American intellectual's firmest response to his contemporary scene.

Performances of the year: Simone Signoret in *Room at the Top*, Claire Bloom and Richard Burton in *Look Back in Anger*, Emmanuelle Riva in *Hiroshima mon Amour*, Zbigniew Cybulski in *Ashes and Diamonds*, Bergman's stock company in *The Face*, Orson Welles' impersonation of Clarence Darrow in *Compulsion*. Reminders of undefeatable professionalism: Rosalind Russell in *Auntie Mame*, Cary Grant in *North by Northwest*. Of versatility: Carolyn Jones in a whole range of not very distinguished parts. Of comic verve: Jack Lemmon ecstatically disguised in *Some Like it Hot*, Shirley MacLaine bouncing her way through *Ask Any Girl*, and Noël Coward, Our Man in the Caribbean, warding off an excess of Cuban hospitality with an urbanely trailed umbrella and the bleak smile of St. James's.

It has been a stimulating and optimistic year, yet at the same time a melancholy one. We shall never again see Gérard Philipe, one of the few actors able to combine *jeune premier* charm with the most discriminating and searching dramatic ambitions, or the elegantly elongated Kay Kendall, or Errol Flynn, who seemed (in films like *Roots of Heaven*) to have lived through a legend and come out on the other side as an actor, or the grittily good-natured Paul Douglas. James Gleason, Edmund Gwenn, Una O'Connor (last seen as the stubborn parlour maid of *Witness for the Prosecution*), Victor McLaglen, Lou Costello are among the veterans who died during 1959, and whose careers between them summed up years of Hollywood. France lost Jean Benoit-Lévy, who directed some attractive features before turning increasingly to administration, and Jean Grémillon, a difficult talent to pigeon-hole because of the unbalance in his style between the romantic (*Remorques*) and the realistic (*Le six juin à l'aube*), but a director who could, in a film such as *Lumière d'Été*, finely sustain an atmosphere.

Preston Sturges had deserted Hollywood long before his death last summer, and most of the American cinema's talent for satire went with him. De Mille, the colossus-figure of Hollywood since its foundation, died in the same year as a British pioneer from a still earlier generation, George Albert Smith, whose life incredibly spanned more or less the entire history of film-making. Finally, British documentary and the British Film Institute lost a valued friend in Jack Beddington, not himself a film-maker but a judicious and generous supporter of talent. He will be especially remembered for his pre-war years with Shell and his wartime service with the Films Division of the Ministry of Information, when he fought the battles of the Crown Film Unit and aided artists such as Humphrey Jennings to achieve their vision of Britain at war.

Opposite page: "Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe". Jean Renoir and Catherine Rouvel, the young discovery who plays the lead in his new film, on location at Les Collettes, near Cagnes. Renoir shot much of the film here, near the villa where his father spent the last years of his life.



PENELOPE HOUSTON  
and DUNCAN CROW

# INTO THE SIXTIES

SOONER OR LATER, EACH decade of the cinema's history acquires a personality, an image. We think we know what we mean when we talk about the "cinema of the 1950's," or the "characteristic themes of the 'thirties." We have conveniently to forget, the more easily to remember, since there are always films and personalities which seem obstinately to belong to some other time, or to stand aside from time altogether. But at least we have a map with the contour lines plotted in; and this is the way histories of the cinema usually get written.

In a few years, we are going to know where we are with the 1960's. The themes will define themselves, the "characteristic" features emerge; some indestructible idols will have proved mortal and the faces on the hoardings will look a little different. All the inevitable nostalgia for the 1950's will creep in: for an art so short-lived, there is nothing like the cinema for encouraging reminiscence. At the moment, though, it's an agreeably indefinite prospect, although there have been hints enough in the last few years to indicate the way things may be moving.

This feature is concerned with taking up some of these indications: not with what we might like to happen, but with what we think likely to happen: not crystal-gazing, but a tipster's survey having some basis in known form.

We have been cautious enough to restrict ourselves to fairly familiar ground. Any Western reporter making a similar reconnaissance ten years ago would have left Japan out of account (*Rashomon* only won its Venice Grand Prix in 1951) and could have heard of Satyajit Ray only as a commercial artist who had just written an article for *Sequence*. Even now, we really have no idea of what could come out of the East. And there are hazards closer home: the forecaster of 1950 might have deduced that neo-realism would outlast the decade; that if a major Swedish film-maker startled the world it would be the established Alf Sjöberg rather than the relatively untried Ingmar Bergman; that the decline in Western audience attendances, however inevitable, would be gradual rather than precipitate. Any of those guesses would have been wrong. We have little doubt that this exercise in deduction will prove equally fallible. But a magazine's first number in a new decade is an open invitation to speculation: we haven't been able to resist taking it up.

## *New Waves: New Publics*

PRETTY MUCH LIKE the old wave; a neo-romantic sequel to neo-realism; the new nihilists; France's Angry Young Men; and, of course, something every country would like to have. The *nouvelle vague* has been called all these things, and in the last six months of 1959 nothing in the cinema has been more determinedly discussed. Every cineaste has looked into his own country's cinema, like an amateur gardener poking about in a newly-planted seed-bed, trying to dig up any trace of an indigenous *nouvelle vague*. France has been envied; French cinema is again on top, as it has not been since the 1930's; France has found her new generation. Any survey must begin here; and it may seem audacious to suggest, in this mood of urgent discovery, that within a year the *nouvelle vague*, as such, will be stone dead.

The fact is, however, that the *nouvelle vague* is not a movement: it has no policy, no leaders, no theorists, as the neo-realists had the invaluable Cesare Zavattini to define their idealism. Conditions have arisen in which all sorts of young talents have been able to make all sorts of films; and they have been immensely helped by the feeling that they were part of a



forward surge, were in the swim. In the same way, a good many novels have probably been accepted by British publishers in recent years because they had the Angry Young Man flavour: *Lucky Jim* had to be written before the imitators began flooding the market. The whole idea of a *nouvelle vague*, in fact, has been immensely useful in stimulating public interest; and because the movement itself is as indefinite, as much a creation of the Press, as sturdily denied by the people supposedly a part of it, as the whole Angry Young Man business in Britain, it will prove as short-lived. The talents, once launched, no longer need the label; the talents which should never have been launched won't be kept afloat by it.

Our Paris correspondent, Louis Marcorelles, commented in our last issue on the inevitable "wastage". Already it is rumoured that at least one vaunted *nouvelle vague* production can never be shown. Its makers, hurling themselves excitedly into the breakers, neglected the elementary precaution of taking along a continuity girl; and the incoherence of the material they shot is apparently such as to defy assembly by themselves or anyone else.

This is a cautionary tale from a movement that never was a movement. Every cineaste, though, should hope that his own country could provide a public like that of France, alive enough to experiment to put a new generation of film-makers commercially on its feet. The *nouvelle vague* will soon go out of the headlines. It will leave at least two big new talents, Alain Resnais and François Truffaut, and one agile *petit-maitre*, Claude Chabrol. If the first two are not the major directors of the French cinema of the 1960's, it is more likely to be the fault of the cinema than of the artists.

If the French have recently provided most of the talking-points, they have still had a difficult time keeping up with Ingmar Bergman. Single-handed, he has revived the reputation of the Scandinavian cinema; has enabled our own National Film Theatre to stage one of its most popular seasons; and has stimulated more incoherent babbling from the world's critics than any other film-maker. Artistically, Bergman at forty-one is in the middle of his career. Where he goes depends on how rapidly he can work his way out of the thickets of symbolism and private ritual which still entangle his work. Bergman is one of those Chinese-box artists who always fascinate critics: each film yields a riddle, each one seems to move a little closer to the centre. Then the moment comes when one begins to wonder: are we always being offered the same riddle; and is the centre going, after all, to be just another empty box? These are questions only Bergman can answer. But in public relations terms, we are inevitably in for a reaction. The director whom one popular press critic could describe in 1959 as "the man most likely to become the Shakespeare of the cinema," is unlikely to be assessed in just those terms by 1961. The over-publicised artist has a hard time in the mid-twentieth century. Bergman, after two years in the spotlight, is due for a period of tranquillity—which may give him the artistic breathing-space he seems to need.

The intense interest in Bergman and the young French film-makers is a signpost for the future. Audiences in the late 1950's have been looking to a new type of cinema: they may continue to expect masterpieces from the older generation (Renoir, Ford, de Sica), but they no longer look to them for revelations. The interest is already in a cinema less sweeping, closer to the



The inward-turning eye . . . images from private worlds. Top: Bergman's "The Face": the charlatan and the dying actor. Centre: Leopoldo Torre Nilsson's "The House of the Angel". Below: the soldier turned priest in Ichikawa's "The Burmese Harp".



novel in the intensity of its preoccupations, the amount of meaning it can isolate in one limited area of experience. Essentially, the problems are those of the individual confronting himself: not concerned with social conditions, nor with issues demanding big decisions, but with the complicated business of living. The artist, whether it is Alain Resnais in *Hiroshima mon Amour* reviving memories of lost time, or Bergman in *Wild Strawberries* looking for the point at which an old man lost his way, or Chabrol in *Le Beau Serge* working out his parable of redemption, is turning inward rather than outward.

• • •

We are going, I am convinced, to see a great deal more of this type of cinema. One reason, if not the main one, is political and social. With the de Gaulle régime in France, with the swing against the Left in the British General Election, this is not the likeliest moment for a cinema of direct or powerful social comment in these countries. Such a cinema demands a fairly strong Left as a pre-condition. When the Left is indecisive or divided, you are likely to get a kind of nihilism (which some people hold has already arrived in France), or a turning in on the problems of the isolated individual. In Eisenhower's America, Chayefsky succeeded the pre-McCarthyist brand of social protest; in Poland, Wajda no longer looks at the purposeful group but at the uncertain, hesitant doubter. And in Britain in the 1960's we are unlikely, I believe, to see many films specifically about slums, or race prejudice, or the sort of issues that have agitated Mr. Ted Willis. We might, though, see quite a few pictures about working class people, or Negroes, or the new world of the housing estates, or sex relationships, or getting along with people. Not crusading films, but private films.

The film of overt social comment, it's worth noting, always frightens commercial interests. In the new order that is coming everywhere in production, films of the type I've tried to indicate above are more likely to slip through: at least they won't, to the same extent, frighten backers away. John Osborne, for instance, blended both elements in *The Entertainer*; and *The Entertainer* is being filmed, though one wonders how many of those references to Suez are going to get on to the screen, even in the most approximate form. We are bound, in the 1960's, to see a good many films about human unhappiness; but not about the kind of unhappiness that can be righted by the welfare state.

The new order in production has developed almost surreptitiously in Britain. For years people have been talking about an increase in independent production: now, suddenly, it is here. *Room at the Top* and *Look Back in Anger* were independently made; so were the phenomenally popular *Carry on, Nurse* and *I'm All Right, Jack*. Both the Rank Organisation and Associated British have recently cut their own direct production schedules. The new Bryanston group, the Allied Film-makers company headed by Jack Hawkins and Richard Attenborough, show the independents on the move. In artistic terms, the advantages of independence are entirely simple: since a major studio has to keep its employees active and its studios occupied, there is always the temptation to make the routine production simply to keep the machinery ticking over. An independent organisation, renting its studio space as it needs it, has—theoretically at least—the right and the opportunity to be selective and individual. In Britain and America, the 1960's are going to be the decade of the independent producer; a prospect to be looked forward to with at least qualified optimism.

Another of the barricades in the way of change has come surprisingly close to toppling in the last few months. It is just on three years now since the Americans, fighting a television system censored not formally but by the conventions of family entertainment, decided to relax their own Production Code. The Code itself, with all those prudishly precise regulations about swearing and nudity and the punishment fitting the crime, had long been an elaborate barbed wire fence to which

producers surreptitiously took their wire-cutters. Now the wires are down. Compare the New York girls of *The Best of Everything* with their predecessors in one of the old standards such as *Stage Door*; or note the clinical calculation of *Anatomy of a Murder*; or the conscienceless cruelties of half-a-dozen B-thrillers. Where America leads, in this field, the world finds it difficult not to follow. The British censor, with no binding code to be formally renounced, has become noticeably more liberal in recent months. If one American company seems to have celebrated its freedom by developing a rather extreme interest in abortion (although chance usually saves its heroines from the operating table), the British trend appears to be towards strip-tease. In *Too Hot to Handle*, in *Beat Girl*, in *In the Nick*, all recently completed, we are apparently going to find the new liberalism equated with a burlesque show.

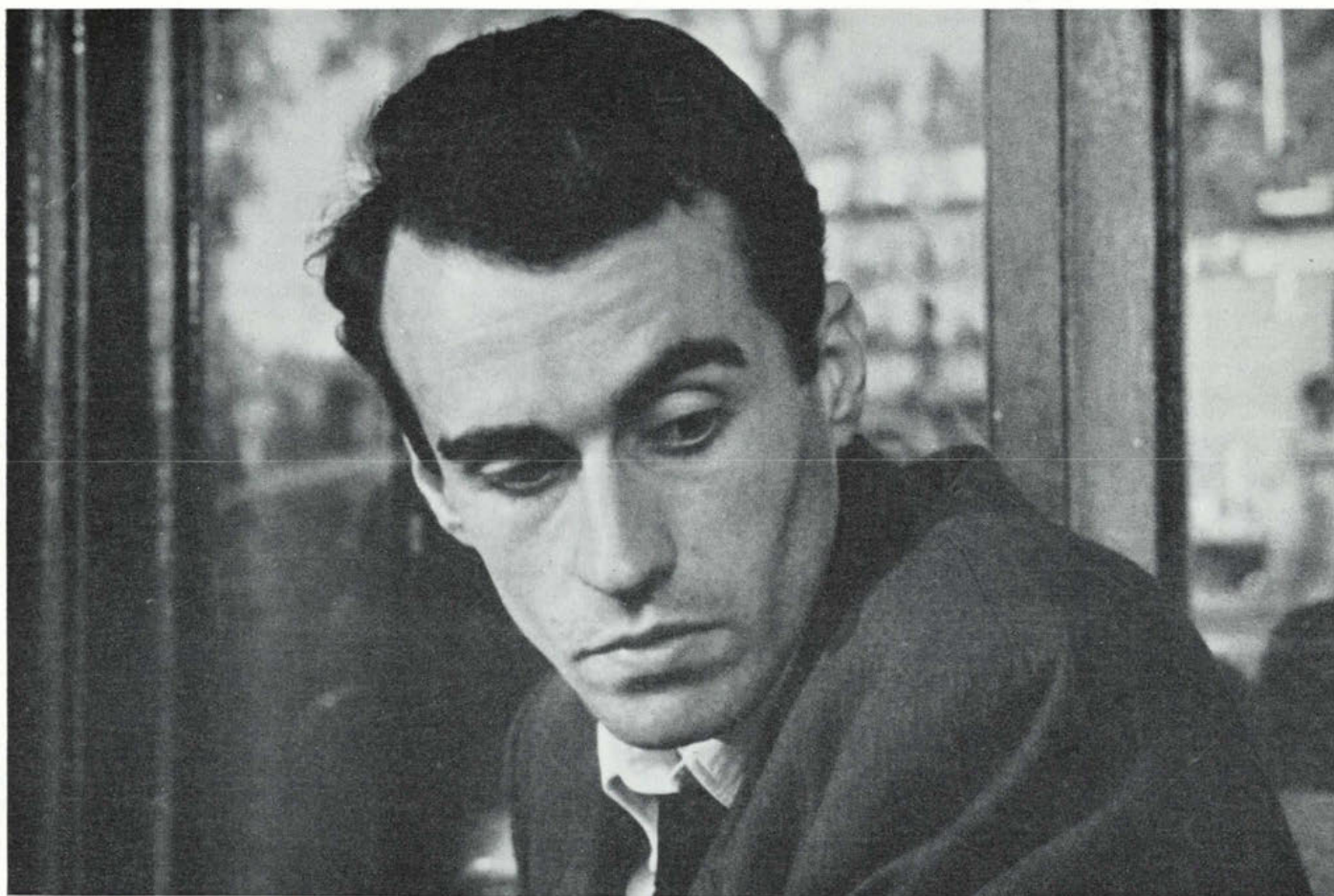
Once the teeth of censorship have been drawn, any newly imposed restrictions are likely to lack the old bite. But it is not too hard to foresee that 1959-1960 may mark the furthest swing of the pendulum in this direction. Audiences don't want more censorship; but they are beginning not altogether to like what the screen shows them. The intense cynicism of many recent American films, the open sadism of others, is addressed not to an adult public but to the jaded palate of the tired teenager. When the revolt comes, as it seems more or less bound to do within two or three years, it could well take the form of a new puritanism. Already there are straws in the wind: the horror film is collapsing; the attempt to bring back the old gangster stories, with a top-dressing of 1950's brutality, seems to have died on its feet; the "family picture" is coming back. In France national prestige is held to be at stake if *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* crosses the Channel. A new authoritarianism may go with a new puritanism; these things move in cycles, and we may be closer than we think to the mood which in the early 'thirties sent the Legion of Decency tearing into the American industry.

• • •

It is the interaction between audience and creators, in the end, that determines the type of cinema we get. Duncan Crow, in the second section of this feature, considers the possible size of the audience of the 1960's. Here I am concerned with what it will want. Mostly, of course, more of the same: the inescapable routines of entertainment. Horror will be out, for a while; if war films don't dwindle away, we will be learning something new and unwelcome about human nature; unless the Americans have been too intimidated by the lead the Russians have set up, we will be in for a new cycle of Hollywood space travel; the giant spectacles will pound unrelentingly on.

What of general trends in this country? There have been suggestions in recent years that audiences would come to accept continental pictures, would overcome their ingrained hostility to dubbing or sub-titling. Yet a few months ago, when *Mon Oncle* went the rounds, the infallible Josh Billings of the *Kine Weekly* reported that its appeal was still limited to what the trade calls "better class halls." The double-X shocker bill, whatever its country of origin, has crashed a few language barriers. Otherwise, I believe, there is precious little evidence that the mass public is really more receptive to the continental or off-beat film. The specialised cinemas, certainly, have been doing well, and it seems clear that the whole trend towards a growing minority public, within a shrinking majority, will continue unchecked. Yet there is also a hazard: as films grow more personal, which in some cases means more "difficult", as the private voice begins to be more loudly heard, the gap between the informed enthusiast and the larger public may be extended. It is wide enough already: it wouldn't be altogether surprising, though certainly something to be regretted, if the 1960's saw an even greater gulf between the films the world's industries sell to their mass public and the film the enthusiast scrapes together the money to make for other enthusiasts. The cinema began as a mass medium, art and entertainment;





*The private face: Martin Lassalle as the central character in Bresson's "The Pickpocket", an exploration of the world of the solitary small-time thief.*

seventy years after its beginnings, it might conceivably find itself a mass entertainment and something of a minority art.

In ten years we may be seeing new films via television—at least it should be perfectly feasible to show them on TV, in colour and on a reasonably big screen, if that is what audiences want. But, however and wherever we are going to do our film-going, one encouraging certainty remains. 1959 has been a year of intense vitality, an amazingly confident contrast to the uneasy 'fifties. The cinema has been killed off in the headlines several times during the past few years. The corpse has never been looking better.

PENELOPE HOUSTON

### *Vital Statistics*

BEFORE SPECULATING ABOUT the fortunes of the British film industry during the next decade, it is illuminating to take a quick look at what has happened to its vital statistics in the 1950's. Whenever one is asked to do a little public crystal-gazing there is always a tendency, at least there is a tendency on my part, to feel that I must think up something really dramatic. Even so, I doubt whether, had I been prognosticating about the forthcoming decade in 1949, I would have dared to conjecture anything as sensational as actually happened, especially to the cinema's audience.

It was clear that television was on the increase and that the cinema was about to feel the draught. But who would have given it as a sober judgment that in ten years the number of television licence-holders would rise from a mere quarter of a million at the end of 1949 to a full ten million at the beginning of 1960? Or who would have dared to tell Wardour Street that

the draught would gradually grow in strength until it became a force ten storm? In 1950 the average weekly admissions to cinemas in Great Britain were about 27 million; in 1959 the figure was under 12 million.

If this rate of decline were to continue, then in 1969 the average weekly attendance would be only about 5 million—and at that level surely the industry as we now know it would have ceased to exist? We should also remember that the greatest loss of audience has been in the past three years, with a decline of about 17 per cent. annually. If *this* current rate of decline were to continue, then—but I can hardly bring myself to type the figure . . . under two million, I'm afraid! R.I.P.

The first figure of five million seems most unlikely; and the second figure is quite impossible—it's the sort of thing that only happens when two sensations are trying to outscore each other. At what level, then, will the attendance rate settle down?

In the spring of 1958, taking current factors into account, it seemed to me that the stabilisation point would not be reached much above 12 million a week. It now seems as if even that depressing figure was too optimistic. But I doubt whether it was very much so. Provided that the cinema can "woo and win" (as a *Times* leader put it) the new generation of those who were children at the end of the war, or not even born then, I think we shall see the attendance rate in the 1960's averaging about ten million a week.

Not only did the audience contract alarmingly during the past decade, but there was a widespread closure of cinemas. In 1950 there were about 4,600 cinemas with a total seating capacity of some 4½ million; by the end of 1959 the number of cinemas was down to some 3,600 and the total seating capacity to about 3½ million. Comparison of these figures will show that it is the smaller cinemas that have been forced to close down



under the combined pressure of rising costs, falling revenue and entertainments tax.

How many more cinemas are likely to close? Unless a cataclysm occurs, and bearing in mind the distribution of cinemas in the different size groups and their locality, it would seem that we may end up—in the 1960's anyway—with some 3,000 cinemas and a total seating capacity of just under 3 million. These 3,000 will include most of today's cinemas which have more than 1,250 seats; the closures in sizes below that will probably not involve many of the very small (under 500 seats) cinemas. The social implications of the small rural cinemas being forced to close for economic reasons are serious enough for a government in our present welfare climate to order palliatives—as, indeed, was the June, 1959, entertainments tax reduction. It would not be surprising to see these small, struggling cinemas in certain areas further excused in the future—even, indeed, aided in certain circumstances.

It may seem to be carrying crystal-gazing too far to envisage a situation in which the government might aid a cinema, as opposed to the industry as a whole. I beg to differ. One thing I would have been quite right about in my putative prognostications of 1949 would have been my certainty that during the 1950's the British cinema would become more and more a protected industry. There is no need to rehearse all the details: the temporary N.F.F.C. becoming permanent, the voluntary Eady levy becoming a statutory Fund, the continuance of the Quota—and this time with the added feathers of the mothering wing to include newsreels.

Broadly speaking, government interest in the film industry started with protecting the audience (the 1909 Act and the rise of censorship); it then moved on to protecting the producer, and the first flakes of the 1927 Quota have snowballed into the elaborate machinery of the present day. The way things are going in the industry, the 1960's offer two alternatives: either the machinery of protection must be dismantled—which is as unlikely as an average weekly attendance of 2 million, when one remembers the Cinematograph Films Act, 1957, and the Quota Act of the present session; or else protection will have to go further. First, protect the audience; then protect the audience and the producer; and in the 1960's begin the *ad hoc* protection of the exhibitor which in due time—either in the 1967 or the 1977 Cinematograph Films Act—will move into the Statute Book.

Despite the aid to producers which I am sure will continue to come from the Film Fund Agency, the Quota, and, with some policy changes, the N.F.F.C., the present indications are that in the early 1960's at least, the "big battalions" will increasingly withdraw from production. They will leave the field to the so-called independents, who, if they succeed in capturing that new generation, will become increasingly "vested" in their interests. Meanwhile the "big battalions"

will have been busy with other things—things like television, dance-halls, discs . . .

History can hardly repeat itself, for the circumstances change with the days; but I can foresee a fascinating struggle for power in the new British film industry about 1966 or 1967. I would refer candidates to the events of thirty years before. They may learn a few tips.

DUNCAN CROW

## Safe Bets

The "smellies" (no explanation necessary) and the "tinglies" (a short, mild electric shock administered through the arms of one's cinema seat) will prove even shorter-lived crazes than 3D-with-spectacles. But before 1970 someone *will* devise a 3D system that really works.

AUDREY HEPBURN will be the big Hollywood prestige star of the 1960's, with JOANNE WOODWARD and LEE REMICK as runners-up; JEANNE MOREAU and EMMANUELLE RIVA will become the most overworked actresses in France; British actresses will go on complaining that there are no parts for them in British films.

Actors: plenty of competent players, but a shortage of stars in more familiar, long-established moulds. Personalities certain to make their own impression include BEN GAZZARA, DEAN STOCKWELL and HORST BUCHHOLZ in Hollywood, PETER O'TOOLE in Britain, GERARD BLAIN in France.

MARLON BRANDO, who has already directed one Western, will make increasingly infrequent screen appearances and will turn more intensively to direction. CHARLES LAUGHTON and/or ORSON WELLES will make an uncharacteristic masterpiece.

CHAPLIN, after all, will make another film—non-political in content.

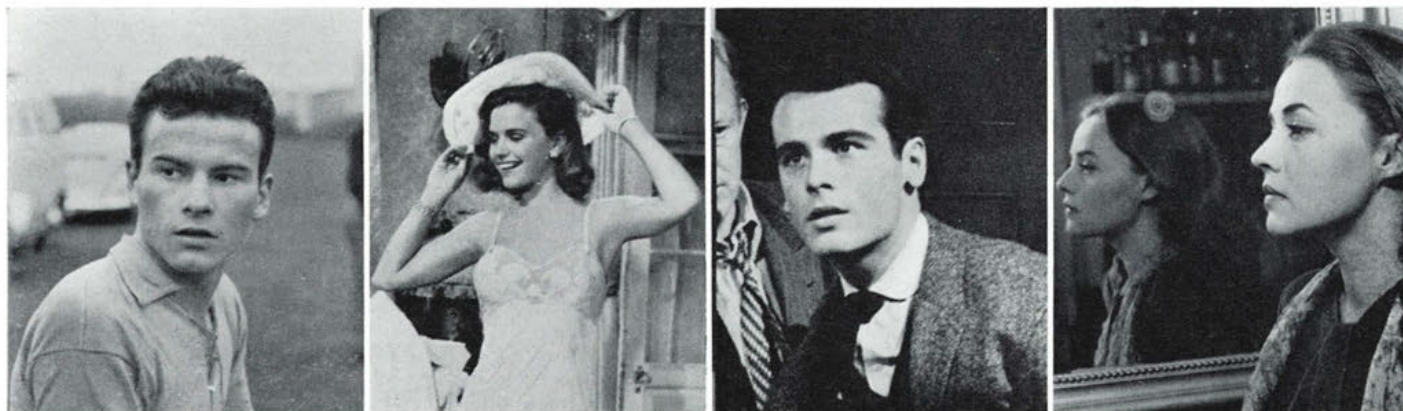
A good many of the wandering American directors of the 1950's will return home, having discovered that Europe may briefly fascinate but doesn't lastingly nourish the Hollywood film-maker.

Several efforts have been made in the 1950's to launch the Japanese cinema in Europe: none has really succeeded. In the 1960's it may be done—as a cult, certainly, but a big enough one to cause a stir.

Some new country will suddenly emerge to startle everyone with a fully-fledged cinema and a brilliant young director: the National Film Theatre will mount a season. There is not all that much unexplored territory left, but it's more likely to be somewhere in Central or South America than in the Far East.

Most optimistic—and final—guess: British intellectuals will begin to take the cinema seriously; film titles will creep tentatively into the book and theatre columns of the Sunday papers. We won't equal France, where a new film is discussed just as seriously as a play or a novel, but we will be on the way.

Some faces for the 'sixties. Left to right: Horst Buchholz (in "Endstation Liebe"), Lee Remick ("The Long Hot Summer"), Dean Stockwell ("Compulsion"), Jeanne Moreau ("Les Amants").





# London Festival



COMMENTING ON THE 1959 London Festival, the critic of the *Daily Mail* announced that he was "not sure what useful purpose is served by *any* film festival." Apart from the fairly obvious one of bringing together an outstanding collection of films, London's special achievement has been to interest distributors in films they might otherwise scarcely hear about and to show some items never likely to achieve commercial distribution. (In fact, 22 films from the two previous years have now been bought for public exhibition in Britain.) The Festival, too, has brought these films to a London audience within six months of their first Continental showing. Surely even those journalists with the faultiest memories would not wish a return to the bad old days when we sometimes had to wait a year or more for our first sight of a Cannes or Venice prizewinner. Now it is possible to assess and compare the work of most of the world's leading film-makers *en masse*: in 1959, for instance, one could see 25 features within fourteen days.

Such an intense concentration is liable to strain both eye and pocket, especially in such a rich year as 1959. Those with enough stamina to stay the full course were rewarded with outstanding work from France and from individual talents in India, Japan and Mexico, plus some distinctive, though slightly less compelling, productions from half-a-dozen countries. Only two major items escaped the net—*Hiroshima mon Amour* and *La Caida*—and then only because of the reticence of their English distributors.

Inevitably there were a few disappointments: the somewhat over-large Eastern European entry was very variable in quality, thereby giving a sadly accurate picture of the conditions of these countries' industries. The 1959 festival was also the most serious in tone; the world's problems rested heavily on many of the films; there was little escapism and even less comedy—another sign of the times, perhaps.

As before, the emphasis remained on the films, with a judicious balance between the established names (Buñuel, Kurosawa, Donskoi, Bergman) and the "young guard" from all over the world. This is a festival with little money for conscious glamour—in any case, South Bank in October is hardly the best place for festival flim-flam. Instead, London provided a large and discerning audience whose enthusiasm quickly infected the (regrettably) small number of overseas film-makers who could afford to attend. François Truffaut was delighted by the reception for *Les Quatre Cents Coups* and was present when a special award was made to the young French cinema in general; and Jiri Trnka, whose solid, military appearance made a charming contrast with his own delicate puppets exhibited in the foyer, displayed the calm reticence of an artist who reigns supreme in his own particular

world. Another visitor, Lionel Rogosin, who presented *Come Back Africa*, achieved a remarkable *rapport* with his audience and on one occasion conducted an *al fresco* discussion outside the N.F.T., energetically encouraging a group of lively white South Africans to rethink some of their country's problems.

As for the films themselves, this article is intended as a mopping-up operation rather than a post-mortem. Since the majority of the features were covered in the preceding number of *SIGHT AND SOUND*, whilst others are reviewed elsewhere in this issue, I am left mainly with the Festival's own choices—films which, for one reason or another, have never appeared in the continental calendar. This innovation, apart from giving the London festival a personality of its own, uncovered some rare treasures. Rejected by Venice and now welcomed by London, Satyajit Ray's beautiful *World of Apu* provided, in the words of one critic, "ample justification for any festival." Since all three parts of Ray's trilogy received their British premières at the National Film Theatre, it seemed fitting that the theatre's own award—the Sutherland Trophy—should go to *Apu* (with a special mention to Karel Reisz's *We are the Lambeth Boys*). In view of the chicanery and artful lobbying surrounding many film prizes, it is gratifying that this award has honoured and encouraged two artists, Ozu and Ray, who have received little enough recognition elsewhere.

Ozu reappeared in the festival programme with *Higanbana* (or *Equinox Flower*); and the opening two or three shots were sufficient to establish its director's identity. Here is a style which jettisons almost all the conventional trappings of "cinema": there are no camera movements, no continuity



Family group in Ozu's "Higanbana".





Georgia: "Somebody Else's Children".

devices, no carefully worked out climaxes. Ozu's concern is entirely with his characters—again a middle-class Japanese family—and he views them with a kind of mellow understanding and wry humour which is unique in the cinema. The central situation of a father reluctant to allow his daughter to marry the man of her choice touches on a valid Japanese social problem. Here it is developed through a haze of sentimental nostalgia by a veteran artist with an uncommonly acute awareness of family psychology. In other hands such a static style could become unbearable; and even here there are devices (some characters are made to act directly into the camera lens) which seem repetitious and over-indulged. Although less complete and memorable than *The Tokyo Story*, *Higanbana* draws us slowly and discreetly into Ozu's private world, in which life seems to go on, tranquilly, after the last image has faded from the screen. And the acting is marvellous.

Of the two Russian choices, Mark Donskoi's *At a High Price* divided audiences into opposing camps, with much fierce partisanship on either side. Without achieving the purity and density of his Gorki series, the film nevertheless retains much of Donskoi's poetic feeling for his characters. It is no way realistic, the opening shots telling us that we are in a world of romantic fable, and everything that follows is slightly larger than life, including the gipsies who provide the vivid middle sequences. Donskoi has been less successful with his colour and some of his players, and technically the film is very erratic. But his personality is imprinted on almost every scene and that is something to be grateful for.

*Somebody Else's Children*, made at the Tbilisi Studios, was in some respects the surprise of the festival, its individual charm managing to survive a tiresomely folksy and heavy music score, some murky photography and at least one wooden performance. Another family story, this time about the relations between a foster mother and the children of another man, it resembles an Italian rather than a Soviet film. Its young director, Tenghiz Abouladze, has captured the mood of his Georgian town with remarkable atmospheric sense, the dark Georgian faces have wonderful passion and dignity, and the children are vigorously alive. Both these films were made far from the big production centres in Moscow and Leningrad and both have an unconventional style and spirit. The Georgian cinema, in particular, would seem to have great potentialities.

Noting the extreme sophistication and dilettantism of the Polish entries, one wonders if the Poles realise how far their cinema has "progressed" since *A Generation*. *Farewells*, by Wojciech Has, with its baroque symbolism and moody, enigmatic ambiguities, is a difficult film to assess. Obviously owing much to its literary origins, it reiterates a number of the Polish cinema's favourite themes (disillusioned youth, a crumbling old régime, wartime confusions of loyalties) without adding anything very new. At the same time, it suggests a directorial personality which has not yet found its own style but is strong enough to achieve an atmospheric impact. Judging by *The Train*, Jerzy Kawalerowicz has developed into Eastern Europe's smoothest and most accomplished craftsman, capable of overcoming the fiercest technical problems. Set almost entirely on a night train, his film is magnificently atmospheric; as a story, it is basically hollow and derivative, full of smoky coffee bar sexiness and half-digested Western influences. One long sequence in which a murderer is chased into a graveyard and attacked by the train's passengers attempts to raise the narrative from a realistic to a symbolic plane; yet its precise purpose remains obscure because Kawalerowicz seems to be striving for a significance beyond his reach.

With packed houses, a lively atmosphere and rather more press coverage than before, the London Festival is now firmly established as a centrepiece of the National Film Theatre year. Nevertheless, some leading critics still show a strange reluctance to recognise this annual treat for what it is: a stimulating variation on the weekly round and an opportunity to assess what the real cinema is capable of achieving. The final sequence from *Nazarin*, the black-and-white imagery of *Conflagration*, Truffaut's view of Paris by night, Apu's last vision of his wife at the station... these moments in themselves are worth anybody's time and money. Of course, a little enthusiasm helps as well.

JOHN GILLET

### Shorts: animated films: children's films

SECTIONS DEVOTED TO SHORTS, animated productions and children's films were for the first time included in this third London Festival; and, thanks to collaboration from Shell, British Transport Films, Halas and Batchelor and the Canadian National Film Board, visiting artists from half-a-dozen countries were able to attend. The innovation made a welcome extension to the festival, though the choice of films, particularly among live-action shorts, could have been more inspired. Nearly a hundred films were shown, yet disappointingly few personal productions infiltrated the technical expositions, the laboured industrial documentaries, and the plodding coverage of ballet, canvas and stone.

One notable exception was Jean-Daniel Pollet's *Pourvu qu'on ait l'ivresse*, a film recalling both *Momma Don't Allow* and the dance-hall scene in *Marty*, which studies an ugly young man's evening at a dance-hall with sympathetic restraint, using tiny, natural incident to comment on his situation. Despite a tendency to concentrate on characters with some immediate physical strangeness, the film has a real sense of compassion, hauntingly suggested in its final, troubled image of the young man removing a carnival mask and glimpsing his reflection in a mirror. Only one other short, also from France, showed similar concern with individuals. *Blue Jeans* (Jacques Rozier) recalls a frustrating day spent by two girl-hunting youths in Cannes. The daily prowling along the front, the ritual of the pick-up, the Vespa ride and the long, entangled afternoon on the beach have the real tang of youth, with concealed camerawork adding to the film's freshness. But Rozier's real success is in exactly communicating the hidden melancholy of his heroes as well as the gaiety.

Apart from these two films and the savage Polish short *Life is Beautiful* (reviewed by Karel Reisz at the 1958 Brussels



Festival), the best of the rest offered mainly minor pleasures. Among them were *Misunderstanding* (Ante Babaja), an agreeable Yugoslav joke about a school of circular sculptural symbolism following the accidental delivery of a millstone to an art gallery; *Corrida Interdite* (Denys Colomb de Daunant), a ballet-like series of bullfight details in slow motion cut to Bach, self-consciously poetic yet undeniably effective; and *A Day in the City* (Pontus Hutten and Hans Nordenstrom), an increasingly ominous travelogue which becomes a lunatic, anarchic satire leading to a splendid scene of a fire engine bursting into flames.

*Klinkaart* (Paul Meyer) was switched from a public show to a members' programme on the intriguing grounds of obscenity; but the print turned out to be without its most notorious scene, of a young girl's "baptism" during her first day at a brick-works. What remained had a certain sub-Buñuel fierceness, though the contemporary value of protest at conditions shown to have existed sixty years ago seems doubtful.

On the whole there was little technical jiggery-pokery, though one film, Herman van der Horst's *Praise the Sea*, contained enough exhibitionism for a dozen festivals. This "portrait" of Holland seemed mainly a demonstration of a hundred and one things to do with a zoom lens. *Skyscraper* (Shirley Clarke, Willard van Dyke and Irving Jacoby) showed a more successful brand of brashness in its zesty account of skyscraper building, accompanied by comments of the workmen (apparently watching the film for the first time) and by some less effective pop construction numbers. Another near-success, Agnès Varda's *Du Côté de la Côte*, surveyed the Riviera with an eye striving to be simultaneously ironical, humorous and tender. After a brilliant opening, though, the film rather lost itself in an exploration of the *mystique* of Eden.

The animated features were headed by Trnka's *Midsummer*

*Night's Dream* and included the first Japanese feature length cartoon, *The White Snake Enchantress*. Hopes of novelty—animated Zen, perhaps?—were quickly dissolved by the conventional telling of a mildly engaging legend. Among the animated shorts, the rarest pleasures were *Seven Arts* (Ion Popescu Gopo), a Rumanian cartoon of exceptional wit and invention, *La Joconde* (Henri Gruel), a very funny swipe at the Mona Lisa cult, undisciplined but full of ideas, and *Sidney's Family Tree* (Gene Deitch), an inspired Terrytoon about an elephant who clumsily insists on being adopted by a very small monkey.

Plenty of new styles were in evidence, notably in the Yugoslav cartoons *Concerto for Sub-machine Gun*, *Tall is the Ticket* and *All the Drawings of the Town*. But their subjects seemed excuses rather than reasons for cartoon-making. New ideas emerged in the East German *There Are No Blue Mice* and the Polish *Changing of the Guard*; developments of old ideas served very pleasantly in Len Lye's *Free Radicals* and Norman McLaren's *Short and Suite* and *Serenal*. Feiffer contributed a disappointing storyboard for Terrytoon's *Another Day*, *Another Doormat*, and Halas and Batchelor refurbished their comedy reputation with *The Insolent Matador*.

Programmes in the children's section were nicely balanced. The two main features were the Soviet *Druzhov*, an attractive, sometimes delightful, production in the *Chuk and Gek* style, and the Children's Film Foundation's *Blow Your Own Trumpet* (Cecil Musk), a brightly played if rather stodgily handled story of a boy's efforts to win a place in the local colliery band. Children's shorts included Edmond Sechan's *The Story of a Goldfish*, a rather ponderous cameraman's trifle which kept cropping up in the adult section of the festival on the pretext that it had something to do with the *nouvelle vague*. Altogether, a varied week.

DEREK HILL

Poland: baroque extremism in "Farewells".







Alain Resnais (right) at work on "Toute la Mémoire du Monde"

# ALAIN RESNAIS

## REBEL WITH A CAMERA

by LOUIS MARCORELLES

A YOUNG FRENCH ACTRESS has been making a film in Hiroshima. On the eve of her return to France she meets a Japanese architect. *Hiroshima mon Amour*, Alain Resnais' first feature, opens on their passionate embrace, she having discovered a love (in Resnais' own words "elle est éclatée") which revives memories of her first love, in France, for a soldier of the German Occupation forces at Nevers. An almost uninterrupted monologue begins between the woman and her past, which the present has so abruptly re-created for her...

As with *Citizen Kane*, only time will tell just where the critic should place *Hiroshima*—a work which irritates some people as much as it excites others, by a man judged to be the most demanding (together with Robert Bresson) among French film-makers. I only know that I find it immensely difficult to sum up the complex creative personality of Alain Resnais, a man I have had the pleasure of knowing for a dozen years. Certainly he is one of the most remarkable of contemporary talents: a director who approaches the cinema with all the urgency of a novelist or a painter, and who has recourse to the whole intellectual arsenal which arms the contemporary French artist. Yet at the same time I seem to detect in his work a sort of unresolved duality between the firmest aesthetic discipline and a rather hazardous intellectual softness.

Resnais was born, a chemist's son, on June 2, 1922, at Vannes, in Brittany. By the time he was ten, he had already amused himself at "film-making" with an amateur camera. His starting point was a story by Gaston Modot, Renoir's favourite actor, found in a magazine lying about the kitchen. At 21, after a short-lived venture into acting, he passed second in the entrance examination for the newly created IDHEC, or Institut des Hautes Etudes Cinématographiques, and took an editing course. He left after eighteen months, a rebel against university routine, and became assistant editor and director to Nicole Védres, with whom he worked on *Paris 1900*. By 1946, when he was 24, Resnais had become closely associated with the whole seething atmosphere of intellectual and artistic activity that was post-Liberation Paris. Comfortably installed by his family in a little Left Bank studio, he worked as assistant on other directors' films or on publicity material, and himself made several 16mm. shorts on young unknown painters—Hartung, Goetz, Malfray, Labisse, Couteau. Then he made *Van Gogh*, shot originally on 16mm. and later blown up to a 35mm. version which in 1949 won him a Hollywood Oscar.

Today Resnais is severely critical of his first professional film, but it is worth reappraisal if only for the impressionist technique which is so revealing of the young film-maker. On the basis of a scenario by Gaston Diehl and Robert Hessens, both art critics, Resnais set out to reconstruct the Van Gogh legend rather than the biographical facts. The drama, to him, was exclusively in the paintings themselves; and so he moved within the canvases with the precision which was later to stamp *Hiroshima*, devising tracking shots, pans, linking images. The subject of the paintings became the theme of the film, the motive being not to elucidate the action in a canvas, as Luciano Emmer was doing at the same time in Italy, but to rediscover the creative continuity of the artist.

As in *Hiroshima*, music already played a major part in providing a sort of foundation for the editing, giving the film its framework. And there was an attempt, too, at an excited lyricism. But, Resnais regrets, "the text was artificial. I'd have done better to use Antonin Arnaud's commentary, which is really explosive." The lyrical emphasis of Marguerite Duras' text ten years later was fully to realise these early intentions.

Two more art films followed in 1950: *Guernica*, in collaboration again with Hessens, and *Gauguin*, with Diehl. The first had its starting point in Picasso's famous painting, but was concerned less to explain the painting than (in Resnais' words) "to bring a social phenomenon into visual sequence." Neither Picasso nor the painting was actually mentioned. Newspaper clippings, graffiti, other canvases, were inserted in turn; and by some curious process of identification Resnais arrived at an exact rediscovery, vouched for by Picasso himself, of the order of the different creative stages passed through by the painter. This time a real poet intervened at the climax, when Maria Casarès read Paul Eluard's poem on *Guernica*. *Gauguin*, split into three sections (Paris, Brittany, Tahiti), and with a commentary based on the painter's letters, returned to the *Van Gogh* formula, but failed to arouse in Resnais the same satisfaction and excitement he still feels when talking of *Guernica*. Although he refused an offer to make a series of art films for an American company, he still believes in the value of this kind of film-making. "One can't dramatise Cézanne, for instance... he's too abstract, too self-enclosed, too perfect; but there are occasions when the realism of the cinema can play a big part in taking paintings out of the dusty setting of the museums."



# and HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR



"Hiroshima mon Amour": "... Bien sûr que je vais rester à Hiroshima avec toi ... "

In 1951 Resnais was commissioned to make a film about Negro art, *Les Statues Meurent Aussi*. He wanted to carry further the idea of bringing together works of art and reality, already outlined in *Guernica*; and he found a new and lasting colleague in Chris Marker, co-director and writer of the provocative script. Himself a writer and film-maker, Marker helped Resnais achieve the literary discipline which for him is inseparable from serious cinema. Shot from material in museums and private collections, *Les Statues* set out to describe the way primitive art degenerates when it comes into contact with white civilisation. The last part of the film satirically showed coloured musicians playing frantic drum solos while, in interlocking images, the batons of white police descended upon black skulls; elsewhere, an image of a witch doctor was linked with one of the Pope. Although the French government banned the film for public exhibition, it was nonetheless awarded the Prix Jean Vigo.

## 2

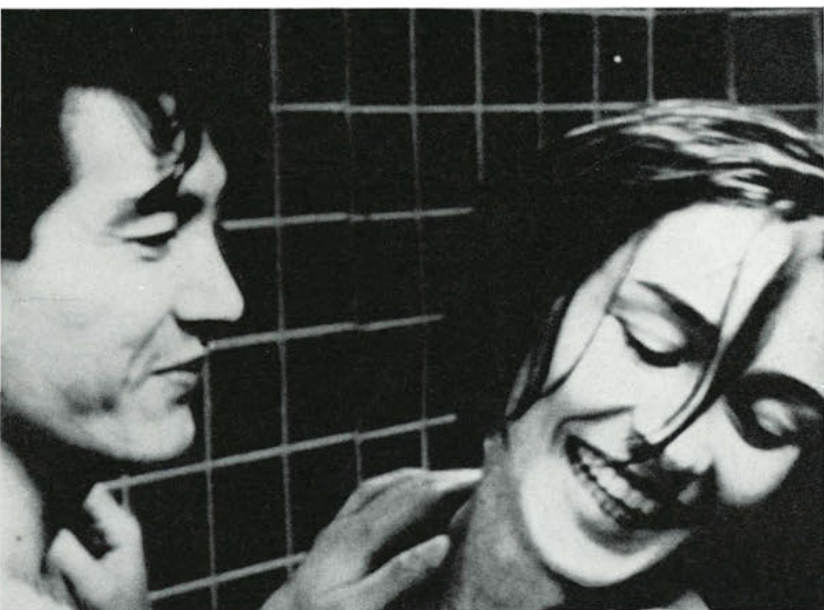
From 1955 on Resnais increased his reputation, and his control of his medium, with, successively, *Nuit et Brouillard* (still his favourite film), *Toute la mémoire du monde* (1956), about the Bibliothèque Nationale, and *Le Chant du Styrène* (1958). Already in *Nuit et Brouillard* we find outlined the pitiful counterpoint between the tragedy of a near past (the Nazi concentration camps) and the inexorable forgetfulness of the present. The crematorium, isolated from its context, could be a peaceful bakery oven; Auschwitz itself, lost in a placid landscape, might be any derelict building. The horror, as in *Hiroshima*, is at once surrealist and cosmic: the huddled corpses are nosed along by a bulldozer; the victims' hair is

gathered in heaps. One also recalls the contrapuntal music by the German-American composer Hanns Eisler and the lyrical commentary by the novelist Jean Cayrol, himself a concentration camp prisoner during the war. The film's whole achievement lay in making actual the horror permanently fixed in the immobility of the past; in reminding us that the past is always present like an accusation, that we are all of us, always, capable of our own part in such horrors.

*Toute la mémoire du monde*, perhaps Resnais' most dazzling film, is hardly more than an endless series of tracking shots, punctuated by sudden camera-swoops or private close-ups of faces and objects; while all the time we are exploring a sort of science-fiction temple in which millions of volumes hold the secrets of all laws, languages and times. The tone is one of mockery, and this is even more marked in *Le Chant du Styrène*, shot in the plastics factories at Péchiney. Here, using Cinema-Scope and colour for the first time, Resnais brought a virtuoso technique to a study of the manufacture of plastics and the transformations the material undergoes; and to comment on these monstrous mutations he asked the writer Raymond Queneau to improvise a poem inspired by the images. The result was a sort of doggerel ballad, beginning with the neo-Lamartinian line: "*O temps, suspends ton bol/en matière plastique!*" Only in the closing images was there any indication that human beings also inhabit this world of pure forms.

In the margin of his own work, but significantly related to it, is Resnais' collaboration in 1954 on the editing of Agnès Varda's first feature, *La Pointe Courte*. A story in the style of Faulkner, with the interconnections of past and present bringing the latter into focus, *La Pointe Courte* concerns a couple on the point of separation who return to the man's





"Tu me plais. Quel événement : tu me plais."

home town. Little by little the past takes shape in the man's memory; while his wife, discovering an unknown side to the man she loves, comes also to realise the necessity to live by compromise and determines not to leave him. Here again, as in *Nuit et Brouillard*, one finds the same inseparable relation between past and present; and one can't help feeling that the conception of this film must have influenced the creator of *Hiroshima*. At any rate, when chance brought together Resnais and Marguerite Duras, he found in the writer that essential which he had been looking for in the commentaries to all his films—a kind of unforced lyricism, to be put to the service of an almost musical construction.

Throughout *Hiroshima*, all Resnais' technique is employed to translate the perpetual counterpoint of past and present into rigorously mathematical or musical terms. Five times, early in the film, we move directly from the lovers' embrace into the tragic past of Hiroshima, the "forgotten city". And in one of these early episodes—the museum sequence, with its dazzling tracking shots orchestrated with the musical score—we are brought close to the concept of a completely lyrical cinema, an idea which has preoccupied Resnais throughout his career.

*Hiroshima*, though its director regards it as a "long short" rather than a true feature, is the climax of his experiments in this direction. There are three reasons for this: the absolute pre-eminence of the editing and, consequently, the shooting script (Resnais follows this very closely, with a minimum of improvisation); the parallel importance of the text; and the use of music as a catalytic agent. Resnais' ambition is for a cinema as disciplined in its laws as are the other arts of music, poetry or painting. Undeniably he has made here the film which the more literately demanding cineastes dream of; and in the commented story, where the principal role is taken by the text, he unquestionably triumphs. Where he partly fails, it seems to me, is in integrating the individual, the unpredictable human being, into his superb structural framework. And my main criticism here is of the self-indulgent elements in Marguerite Duras' script.

Resnais himself unreservedly defends his choice of writer. "I wanted to make a film for women, and I more or less forced Marguerite Duras into going her own way. She was an essential factor in the 'grand opera' style I wanted to give my film." Similarly, the sometimes theatrical tone adopted by the leading actress, the previously unknown Emmanuelle Riva, is in accordance with Resnais' ideas. Both she and the writer went through a strenuous preparation, equal to anything

demanding by Stanislavsky. Marguerite Duras, for instance, had to write a "subconscious continuity" in which, parallel to the dialogue, she defined the climate of each scene, the psychological drives of the characters at any given moment. In Emmanuelle Riva's playing one finds a sense of this tension, for all that it has, I feel, its moments of emotional dishonesty. Resnais, although he admits these criticisms, confirms that this was the style he wanted, that it belongs to the character invented by Mme. Duras and by the actress. And his own view: "I have no particular liking for my heroine. I'm showing an example, an instance, that's all . . ."

## EDITING HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR

by HENRI COLPI

EARLY IN JANUARY, 1959, the full "rushes" of *Hiroshima mon Amour* were screened. Commonplace enough in itself, this event afforded immediate evidence that the film was something out of the ordinary. Contrary to general production practice, issues of editing came up only after the last shot had been filmed, and not from the first days of shooting. But the screening had a sharper significance: first, it proved that the director attached such importance to the editing that not a single scissor cut could be made in his absence; secondly, it emphasised an assurance rare in a director working on his first feature. It is well-known that Resnais is beset by doubts during filming, but all the same one needs to be very sure of oneself to screen the rushes only at this stage, confident that no linking shots will be necessary.\*

The first fortnight of editing was entirely taken up with organising, classifying, numbering the material, so that additional prints could be made. Then the real work began; and it started, as the shooting had done, with the second "act". For convenience rather than any aesthetic reason, the script had been split up into five acts, which it would be as well to detail here. First act: the night of love of the Frenchwoman and the Japanese, intermingled with a dream-like documentary about Hiroshima itself. Second act: the hotel room in the morning. The lovers laugh, talk lightly about Nevers, then separate. Third act: a) the parade. The woman is an actress making a pacifist film; the Japanese finds her again in the peace-march organised for the cameras; b) the lovers are together again at the man's house: the woman tells him that in 1944 she loved a German soldier, and that he is dead. Fourth act: the "riverside café": in no chronological order, memories of Nevers flow together, the past becoming actual. The German was killed on the day of the Liberation . . . the girl's head was shaved . . . she went out of her mind . . . she was shut up by her parents in a cellar. Little by little she forgot this first love: she reached Paris on the day the bomb destroyed Hiroshima. Then (in the present) the lovers finally part. Fifth act: love has grown between them, but the woman refuses to experience it. Forgetfulness, she says, is always stronger: she has forgotten her first love, and the people of Hiroshima have forgotten the bomb. The man follows her through the town, to the station, to a bar. Finally he comes to her room: "*Je t'oublierai, je t'oublie déjà . . .*"

Almost immediately, we were confronted by the sort of problem we were to meet all through the film. The actress,

\**Hiroshima mon Amour* had been shot partly in Japan, in August and September, 1958, and partly in France, at Nevers and Autun, in December, 1958.



wearing a kimono, moves from the terrace towards her room. She leans against the frame of the french-window. She looks at her sleeping lover. His hand moves lightly; and this hand, imperceptibly stirring, revives an old memory: the hand of her first lover moved like this during his death agony. An image of this memory had to appear abruptly on the screen, without preparation or explanation, then vanish. This first, fugitive intrusion from Nevers assumed enormous importance. Should the image be a close-up of the hand, followed by a rapid pan to the blood-streaked face of the young German? ("Your hand moves while you're asleep," she will say a little later, likening sleep to death.) Should it be a two-shot of the heroine lying alongside the corpse? (She will say later: "I stayed close to his body all that day and the next night.") Should it be a shot of the garden ("someone had fired from a garden")? Or all three images; or two only; or some quite different evocation of Nevers?

All these solutions were successively tried. The final decision was for the first mentioned; and this in itself allows one to draw certain conclusions. For instance: the almost ascetic demands Resnais makes on himself find their parallel in what he expects from his public: the shot in question lasts only four seconds, which means that the screen must be watched with total attention. Also, the shot finally chosen was the one provided for in the shooting script: Resnais rarely shot alternatives, and when he did so he always went back again to the original suggestion from the script. After the Japanese section of the filming had been completed, for instance, Resnais was pressed to pad out the Nevers scenes, to develop the story and content here. He did this; but in the end the film was very close to the initial creative scheme, laid down in black and white in the shooting script.

### Intermission

Alain Resnais is always reluctant to show a film before it is finally complete. No one, except the technicians directly concerned, sees it during the course of editing. From this, it's an easy jump to the legend that Resnais likes to keep his film dark, to make a mystery out of it. I was even asked recently whether it's true that when visitors come into the cutting room, Resnais throws a cover over his apparatus to shield the images! It is true, though, that visitors rarely penetrated very far into the cutting room. The rumour had got around that work was in progress on something notable; and there was a feeling that the director and his team should be allowed to work uninterrupted, with the sort of concentration demanded.

In fact, though, the atmosphere in the cutting room was very relaxed. Resnais has an acute sense of humour, and it was more than once necessary to recall him to order, to stop joking and get on with the problems of editing. It should perhaps be made clear that old friendship, numerous shared ideas and cinematic conceptions, linked the director and the montage unit. That is why there was no shadow of discord or disagreement. All the more, in fact, because Resnais listened with the greatest good humour to every suggestion put forward, even the most unlikely, then tried them all out before finally rejecting them.

### Editing: sound: music

*Hiroshima mon Amour* was a wonderful film for an editor. The director was always there; he knew just what he wanted; he had shot with great exactness; and furthermore he is himself an editor—one of the most remarkable in his generation. He took charge himself of the cutting of his short films, with just what discipline and precision is well-known. And, finally, wasn't the whole conception of *Hiroshima* that of an editor? In effect, the centre of the film, its *raison d'être*, is the linkage of Hiroshima and Nevers, the counterpointing of images. Seeing the film, it looks as though the editor's role was of paramount importance. True enough; but his role had been laid down for him unerringly in the shooting script.



"... Jeune à Nevers. Et puis aussi, une fois, folle à Nevers."

The only real problem, then, was to give the right tempo to the images, to arrive at their precise length, to weigh them to a milligramme in order to achieve one of Resnais' essential objectives: musicality. Some critics have discussed the film in terms of music (without reference to Giovanni Fusco's score), notably evoking Stravinsky. Resnais himself, in an interview, put the accent on the film's musical construction. The long finale can be seen as an andante, a form of theme and variations. This holds good to the extent that any attempt to abridge shots or cut passages out (and attempts were made) would take away all the quality and depth from this fifth act, might even rob it of meaning.

The film also includes certain experiments in cutting. One concerns a kind of immediate transition which I like to call "leopard-linking", the reference being to a leopard's leap. The first sustained evocation of Nevers consists of shots in which the girl is hurrying to meet her lover: these images are linked through the movement they contain, but the actual settings change constantly. And if one alleges that the "musical form" authorises a kind of lyrical dimension, one would cite especially the sequence in which the heroine returns to her hotel after the "riverside café" episode. Here, she crosses a square, enters the hall of the hotel, climbs the stairs, arrives at the second floor landing, all in a series of linked movements with no music accompaniment. But in fact we have missed out twenty yards of the square, ten yards of hall, an entire flight of stairs... The cinematic writing now echoes the novelist's tone: "she crossed the square, went into the hotel, climbed the stairs to her floor." An identical effect comes a little later: the girl flings a towel down in the wash-basin (with a panning shot from top to bottom). In the next shot she is going down the stairs; then she is crossing the hall.

One special aspect of the editing concerned the sound track. We know that the shots of Nevers all relate to the past, but they are made to exist in the present, have immediate reality. However, there is no direct sound out of the Nevers sequences (the exception: a single cry). Sound is used as a bridge, so that we hear, over the images of France, a Japanese song, a Hiroshima barge hooter, the croaking of the river frogs. Or take the example of the series of tracking shots linking the streets of Hiroshima and Nevers. This looks like a typical montage effect, but in fact these shots, filmed three months apart and by different units, move at precisely the same speed. (It should be noted, incidentally, that Sacha Vierny, the remarkable French cameraman, was never allowed to see any



of the material shot at Hiroshima. This was one of Resnais' firm decisions: the French camerawork must not be influenced by what had been done in Japan.)

Perhaps the impression that the editing flowed as smoothly as water from a spring, without arguments or difficulties, comes from one of Resnais' remarkable gifts: that of knowing how to guide his collaborators with the most gentle firmness. His direction of actors proves it, as did the record of his previous short films. Possibly the director's influence can best be expressed through the following musical anecdote.

Giovanni Fusco, the Italian composer, arrived in Paris, saw the film, discussed the score, picked out certain sequences and got down to work. Finally the themes were recorded. But the accompaniment to one early sequence (the shots of the Hiroshima museum) made us all jump: a theme was fleetingly introduced, echoing note for note one from *Nuit et Brouillard*. Fusco, though, had never heard Hanns Eisler's music. "Well, there's nothing extraordinary about it," he said. "It's Resnais who guides the composer's hand." It should be added that an interpreter ("traduttore, traditore") was necessary for communication between French director and Italian composer.

The score itself is certainly one of the most remarkable in thirty years of sound films. It is worth noting first the small number of instrumentalists (Fusco has extracted from the film score a "Piccola Suite per 8 instrumenti"). There was no question here of triumphal marches. So the film's credits were constructed against the accompaniment of a single theme, and one which was not to reappear until the final sequences.

From the outset, any thought of easy or childish synchronisations had been banished, as had the idea of a *leitmotif* constantly attached to any character. There is, certainly, a theme for the lovers, but it is sometimes replaced by the theme from the river scene; and, especially, there are the themes of forgetfulness, of Nevers. Counterpointing of sound and image was admitted: alert, warning music, for instance, to make the Hiroshima museum scene the more disquieting; or the lovers' slow music played over the French girl's hurried bicycle ride.

In fact, the film's use of music would repay special study. Note, for instance, the great moment in the station when natural sounds are blurred to permit a musical synthesis, evolving from the lovers' theme to the Nevers theme, and ending on the theme of forgetfulness. Note again how a "nocturne," a piano solo, implies the suppression of all natural sound. Note finally that the sequence of the girl's hesitation in the corridor, which any director would have furnished musically, is left with only the sound of footsteps. The whole conception of how and when music should be used allowed Fusco's score to play its part up to the hilt. The music is "glued" to the images: it *is* the film.

### Final Problems

Before this, though, the question of music had caused considerable worry. Resnais was looking for a sort of musical "texture," something he found clues towards in the work of this or that composer—Stravinsky obviously, or Dallapiccola. He could not bring himself to make up his mind, and the selection of a composer was only arrived at after hours of listening to a thousand and one scores.

That was not the only difficulty. One by one, distributors turned down the film (it was "avant garde" or "not what my public wants"). The producers were anxious to enter it at Cannes; and the work-plan had to be detailed down to the last hour, causing Resnais worries which affected his sleep and his health. He was afraid that haste would prejudice the quality of the film, though his editors, Jasmine Chasney and myself, had promised to countermand the sound mixing if anything seemed not quite right. Finally came the rejection of the film by the Cannes committee, the leaking of the subject the following day in the Press (until then it had been kept secret), and the strain of our uncertainty about its reception. We were sure

it was important, but sometimes doubt crept in . . . Living with it, we no longer saw it clearly.

*Hiroshima mon Amour* roused explosive excitement at Cannes, to which it was invited, out of competition, at the last minute. It has been running in Paris for six months and has been acclaimed overseas: now let the English public judge.

## CONVERSATION with MARGUERITE DURAS

by RICHARD ROUD

MARGUERITE DURAS IS WELL-KNOWN as one of France's leading *avant-garde* novelists, and she has written the scenario and dialogue for *Hiroshima mon Amour* on the same level as her novels. One has only to try to imagine an Anthony Asquith asking a Virginia Woolf to write a scenario in the idiom of her novels to appreciate the rarity of the event. I met Mme. Duras just after she had come from a private showing of *Room at the Top*, and we began by talking about Simone Signoret's performance. Although Mme. Duras is dark, short and rather slight, it struck me that she has herself something of the quality of Signoret in the film. The first thing I asked her was how she came to write the script of *Hiroshima mon Amour*. Knowing what had happened to her novel *Barrage contre la Pacifique* when it was filmed as *The Sea Wall*, one might well have thought she'd have been disinclined to have anything more to do with the cinema . . .

I only accepted because it was Alan Resnais who was going to direct the film. I had seen his *Nuit et Brouillard* and had complete confidence in him.

Did Resnais suggest the idea of the film, or did it come from the producers?

The film was proposed by the Japanese. All they specified was that one episode should take place in France and one in Japan; that there should be one Japanese star and one French one. As a matter of fact they first asked Françoise Sagan to write the scenario, but she turned it down. Resnais and I both agreed that we could not imagine a film about Japan which did not deal with Hiroshima, and we also felt that all that could be done along the lines of showing the horror of Hiroshima by horror had been done—and very well done—by the Japanese themselves in *Children of Hiroshima*. So I tried to do something different. I had nine weeks in which to write the script. All Resnais said was, "Write literature, write as if you were doing a novel. Don't worry about me; forget the camera." His idea was to film my scenario just as a composer would set a play to music—as Debussy did with Maeterlinck's *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

One thing I'd like to ask you about is the very beginning of the film. We see the naked bodies of the lovers tightly intertwined. Then the film cuts to show the bodies glistening as if covered with mica dust. Is this meant as a premonitory image of Hiroshima? Actually, they look like those petrified human couples found at Pompeii.

Yes, there is a kind of anticipatory quality about the image. The bodies are covered with sweat, ashes and dew. I hadn't thought of Pompeii, but it is quite possible as I had just been reading *Gradya*, a fascinating novel by a German writer, Jensen, about Pompeii. Do you know what Resnais calls the next sequence? The opera! It starts with the Japanese architect saying, "Non, tu n'as rien vu à Hiroshima, rien." The girl protests that she has seen everything—the hospitals, the museum, the sight-seeing buses, the newsreels and photographs. We see all these things in this episode, orchestrated with the Stravinskian *ostinato* of Fusco's score and her



constant repetitions. ("J'ai vu les gens se promener, pensifs . . . à travers les photographies, les reconstitutions, faute d'autre chose, les photographies, les reconstitutions, faute d'autre chose, les explications, faute d'autre chose.") We put this sequence in to clear everyone's mind of prejudice, of conventional feelings, and to prepare them to accept what follows, the story of the girl's love for the German soldier.

*Critics have talked about resemblances to Joyce, Faulkner and Proust. Do you see anything in this yourself?*

Joyce, not at all. Proust, well . . . perhaps. The theme of memory and forgetfulness and so forth, I suppose there is something Proustian about it.\* One thing I must tell you, which I haven't told any other interviewer . . . Do you remember the scene at the man's house in the afternoon? She asks him why he is so interested in Nevers, why he keeps asking her about it. He answers, "C'est là, il me semble l'avoir compris, que tu es si jeune, que tû n'es encore à personne précisément." Then she says, "Non, ce n'est pas ça," and he goes on: "C'est là, il me semble l'avoir compris, que j'ai failli te perdre et que j'ai risqué ne jamais jamais te connaître. C'est là, il me semble l'avoir compris, que tu as dû commencer à être comme aujourd'hui tu es encore." In fact I couldn't decide what to write for this scene, so I gave Resnais these three alternatives to choose from. And he used them all. It was very bold, but I think it works, and only someone with Resnais' intelligence would have thought of doing such a thing.

\* Thinking about this later on, I realised how close in many ways the film is to Proust: "I had quite forgotten Gilberte, Mme. de Guermantes; I had quite forgotten my grandmother. And it is our most fitting and cruel punishment, for that so complete oblivion . . . that we can see the same oblivion to be inevitable in the case of those whom we love still."—*Je t'oublierai! Je t'oublie déjà.*

*Have you a favourite scene in the film?*

The one on the staircase in the hotel—but that's because of the way Resnais filmed it and cut it. For sheer visual beauty, though, I think the love scenes in Nevers . . . that waltz!

*Tell me, the music score is credited to Giovanni Fusco and Georges Delerue. Who did what?*

The waltz is by Delerue. All the rest is Fusco. Do you remember when the waltz is first heard—in the scene when she is bicycling across the fields to meet her lover? Those extremely fast tracking shots, and that sudden effect of the camera stopping short when we come to the German. It stops so fast that there is a recoil, as in a car when it pulls up suddenly. The camera seems to go *past* the man for a fraction of an inch, and then returns.

*What are your future plans? Will you collaborate with Resnais again?*

No, I don't think so. He never likes to work with the same writer twice. But I have done an adaptation of my novel *Moderato Cantabile*, and Peter Brook is making it in the Gironde with Jeanne Moreau.

*Have you written the script this time, too?*

Yes, with Gerard Jarlot. He was literary adviser on *Hiroshima* and he helped me a great deal. I've also just finished the first draft of a novel, and I'm about to do the rewriting now. I think it might make a good film, but I don't know.

*Let me ask you one last question. It seems clear to me at the end of Hiroshima that the two are separating for ever, and yet I read an interview with Resnais in which he says that they stay together for a few days, and then separate.*

I don't know why Resnais goes on about their sticking together. That's not the way I wrote it, and it's not the way we planned it. I'll have to talk to him about that . . . Actually it's a pity that no one ever thought of interviewing us together. It might have been very interesting, really . . .

*The riverside café: " . . . Ah, que j'étais jeune un jour."*







DEREK PROUSE

# le testament d'ORPHEE

"As 'Le Sang d'un Poète' was my first film, so 'Le Testament d'Orphée' will be my farewell to the screen. 'Orphée,' in actual fact, completed my film work. 'Le Testament d'Orphée' will be rather like the handkerchief which one waves before the departing train or boat is out of sight . . ."—JEAN COCTEAU

LES BAUX IN PROVENCE is not an easily accessible spot. Out of the tourist season only the occasional bus finds its way to the strange little ghost town perched bleakly on top of a high ridge. In the winter the mistral roars through the narrow medieval alleys and the shell of the ancient fortress; a few crows whirl around the jagged rocks which drop sheer down to the plain. The town far away below . . . that must be Arles; and the flat stretch of water on the horizon . . . that must be the beginning of the Camargue. One walks back through the eerie quiet of Les Baux.

This is the place where Cocteau has chosen to make his last film, *Le Testament d'Orphée*. The unit was installed at the foot of the slope leading to the town, at Baumanière, an oasis of luxury which draws most of the world's connoisseurs of travel at one time or another; the *ombres chevaliers*, they say, are a dream, the *pâté de grive* unforgettable. But today the famous hotelier must conform to the capricious hours of the film-makers. When I arrive at eleven o'clock the terrace is still quiet: *le maître* only finished working at five. A few handsome extras whisper the international gossip of actors: "You should have been here yesterday, they wanted you for an 'homme-cheval' . . ." "Well, they can't expect me to hang around all day in Paris waiting for a call." . . . "They couldn't call you—you haven't got a 'phone.'" . . . "Well, they know my agent . . ."

At twelve Cocteau descends; the rhythm mounts. Instantly ready to talk: about the film . . . about Princess Margaret . . . about Les Baux. "I've wanted to make a film here for years. I discovered the quarries here and was going to make *Britannicus*, then Sartre's *Les Mouches*. No, the film has little to do with my film *Orphée*. It's a film 'sans queue ni tête'; the events are linked as in a dream, with no logical sequence. It is a space film . . . there is so much to discover about time and space . . . there is a man working near Oxford who has made wonderful discoveries, but no one wants to know; we are always confusing the future with the past."

We arrive at the quarries, a high, gaunt cathedral cut into the rocks. "*The Testament* is my legacy to the youth of today—the youth in the shadows who help the poet to bear being misunderstood by the men of his time. Orpheus signifies the poet . . . the poet's legacy." The walls are covered with graffiti; Cocteau will not have them removed, these scrawled assertions of passing youth. Today Cocteau as the Poet will advance towards Minerva (who has become the Goddess of Reason) offering her a flower—the flower into which the poet's identification papers, whirled away by a passing sports car, have turned; the flower of "unreason". The ungrateful Goddess, spurning his gift, lances a spear which pierces the poet to the heart. "But this is only one of my deaths," says Cocteau.

At seventy, spry and vivacious, he will allow no stand-in for this trick-shot. He is delighted with the mechanism which a technician has contrived, and which produces a remarkably realistic effect. The poet lies on the rocks; a centaur, or "homme-cheval", advances to withdraw the spear, which



## FILMS FROM THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

The following films have been added to the Distribution Library during the last three months.

	Reels Sd./St.	Gauge mm.	Running Time
<b>ART AND HISTORY OF THE FILM</b>			
It's a Crime (N.F.B.C.) ... ..	2 Sd.	35	12 mins.
Louis Lumière (French Commentary) ... ..	3 Sd.	16	34 mins.
Pleasure Gardens (James Broughton) ... ..	4 Sd.	16	38 mins.
<b>FILMS ON THE ARTS</b>			
Dom (Polish Experimental Film) ... ..	1 Sd.	16 col.	10 mins.
<b>STUDY EXTRACTS</b>			
Brief Encounter ... ..	1 Sd.	16	10 mins.
Jour de Fête (Jacques Tati) (Finale) ... ..	2 Sd.	16	25 mins.
<b>B.F.I. SPECIALISED LIBRARY</b>			
<i>Television</i>			
Dragnet (Episode) ... ..	3 Sd.	16	25 mins.
This is Your Life (Milton Berle and a survivor of the <i>Lusitania</i> ) ... ..	3 Sd.	16	26 mins.
<i>Transport</i>			
Majorca Steam Railway ... ..	$\frac{1}{2}$ St.	16	11 mins.
<b>SCIENTIFIC LIBRARY</b>			
Hypersonic Shock Tube ... ..	2 Sd.	16 col.	19 mins.
<b>FILMS FOR C.B.A. REGISTERED MEMBERS</b>			
The Quiet One (U.S.A.) ... ..	6 Sd.	16	67 mins.
<b>FILMS MADE BY CHILDREN</b>			
Film Making in Schools (demonstration film) ... ..	$\frac{1}{2}$ St.	16	5 mins.
<b>FILMS ON 8 mm.</b>			
Birth of a Nation Part 1 ... ..	6 St.	8	85 mins.
Birth of a Nation Part 2 ... ..	6 St.	8	105 mins.
Cottage on Dartmoor ... ..	8 St.	8	109 mins.
Home Coming to Germany ... ..	1 St.	8	10 mins.
Intolerance ... ..	13 St.	8	183 mins.
Long Pants ... ..	6 St.	8	87 mins.
True Heart Susie ... ..	6 St.	8	90 mins.
<b>CANOEING FILMS ON 8 mm.</b>			
Canoeing for Beginners Part 1 ... ..	1 St.	8	12 mins.
Canoeing for Beginners Part 2 ... ..	1 St.	8	14 mins.
Canoeing for Beginners Part 3 ... ..	1 St.	8	14 mins.
Kayaking on the South Coast ... ..	1 St.	8	14 mins.
Olympic Games & Championships 1948 ... ..	2 St.	8 col.	29 mins.
Sailing Canoe Racing ... ..	1 St.	8	12 mins.
Three Short Journeys by Canoe ... ..	1 St.	8 col.	18 mins.
Wild Water Canoeing in the French Alps ... ..	1 St.	8	16 mins.



# LECTURES

## JANUARY

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Organisation</i>
5	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College. (Enrolled class)
7	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College. (Enrolled class)
9/10	Weekend	Free Cinema	Paddy Whannel & Brian Groombridge	Kingsgate College, Broadstairs	Kingsgate College, Broadstairs
12	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College. (Enrolled class)
12	7.30 p.m.	The Cinema Industry	W. Charles Everett	West Malling R.A.F.	West Malling R.A.F. (Kent Education Committee)
13	8.00 p.m.	Film-Making for Amateurs	Matt McCarthy	Edgware	Broadfields Evening Institute. (Enrolled class)
14	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
14	7.30 p.m.	The Story of the Film	J.N. Griffin	Peterborough Adult Institute	Peterborough Adult Institute
17	7.30 p.m.	The Work of the British Film Institute	James Quinn	British Council	British Council, London. Overseas Students' Dept.
17	One-day Conference	The film "Look Back in Anger"	Paddy Whannel	Bradford Civic Theatre	University of Leeds Dept. of Adult Education at Bradford
17	7.30 p.m.	Film Comedy	Derek Eastaway	Oxford	City of Oxford Youth Committee
19	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
19/21	10.30 a.m.	Film Music	John Huntley	National Film Theatre	L.C.C. Education Dept. for L.C.C. Teachers
19	One-day School	Film Appreciation	Stanley Reed	Chichester	Bishop Otter College, Chichester
20	8.15 p.m.	The Cinema Industry	W. Charles Everett	N. Kensington Young Conservatives	The City of London Society
21	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College. (Enrolled class)
24	7.30 p.m.	Analysis of "Viva Zapata"	Paddy Whannel	Bexleyheath	Bexley Adult Education Centre
24	Not yet fixed	Film Appreciation	A. Howard Bush	Shropshire	Shropshire Education Committee (Youth Service)
24	3.00 p.m.	Vintage Hitchcock	Ivor Montagu	National Film Theatre	B.F.I. Celebrity Lecture
26	7.30 p.m.	Film Appreciation	W. Charles Everett	West Malling	West Malling R.A.F. (Kent Education Committee)
26	8.00 p.m.	Film Editing and Foremost Directors of Today	Hazel Wilkinson	West Wickham	West Wickham Film Society
26	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
26/29	10.30 a.m.	The Western	Paddy Whannel	National Film Theatre	L.C.C. Education Dept. for L.C.C. Teachers
27	5.15 p.m.	Film Appreciation	Paddy Whannel	Ashford (Audio-Visual Aids in Education course)	University of London Institute of Education
27	8.00 p.m.	Film-Making for Amateurs	Matt McCarthy	Edgware	Broadfields Evening Institute. (Enrolled class)
28	7.00 p.m.	The work of De Sica and Robert Bresson	Stanley Reed	Bristol Film Guild	Bristol Film Guild (for Members)
28	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
28	7.30 p.m.	The Story of the Film	J. Griffin	Peterborough Adult Institute	Peterborough Adult Institute
30	One-day Conference	Two Screens: Menace or Opportunity	Karel Reisz	University of Reading Institute of Education	University of Reading Institute of Education
31	8.00 p.m.	Surprise or Suspense?	W. Charles Everett	Esher	Esher International Club (for their members)

## FEBRUARY

1	7.00 p.m.	Film Music and the Sound Track	John Huntley	Birmingham & Midland Institute	University of Birmingham Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies
1	8.00 p.m.	The Use and Abuse of Television	Stanley Reed	Upminster	Upminster Men's Forum
2	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
3	Not yet fixed	Analysis of "The Wild Ones"	John Huntley	Kingsgate College, Broadstairs	Kingsgate College, Broadstairs



<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Organisation</i>
3	7.15 p.m.	The Need for Education in Film and Television	W. Charles Everett	Felixstowe	Felixstowe Grammar School Parent-Teacher Association
4	2.15 p.m.	Film Appreciation	Roger Manvell	Whittingehame College, Brighton	Whittingehame College, Brighton
4	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
5	2.00 p.m.	Analysis of "Nice Time"	Paddy Whannel	Isleworth	Borough Road Training College (for their students)
7	7.30 p.m.	Analysis of "Twelve Angry Men"	Brian Groombridge	Bexleyheath	Bexley Adult Education Centre
8	6.30 p.m.	Film as an Art	Stanley Reed	Reading	University of Reading Institute of Education
9	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
9	7.30 p.m.	Film Appreciation	W. Charles Everett	West Malling	West Malling R.A.F. (Kent Education Committee)
9	7.30 p.m.	Cartoon Films	John Halas	Salisbury	Salisbury Film Society (Members)
9	7.45 p.m.	Film-Making	W. Charles Everett	Leiston, Suffolk	Leiston Women's Institute
10	8.00 p.m.	Film-Making for Amateurs	Matt McCarthy	Edgware	Broadfields Evening Institute
11	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
11	7.30 p.m.	The Story of the Film	J. Griffin	Peterborough Adult Institute	Peterborough Adult Institute
13/14	Weekend	World Cinema I. Scandinavian Cinema	John Huntley	Debden House	East Ham Education Committee
15	7.30 p.m.	Creative Artists in Film-Making	Stanley Reed	University of Reading Institute of Education	University of Reading Institute of Education
15	5.30 p.m.	The Film Industry	W. Charles Everett	Junior Guards Regt. Pirbright	London Services Education Dept.
15	8.00 p.m.	Film Editing	Stanley Crawford	Watford Ciné Society	Watford Ciné Society (Members)
16	10.30 a.m.	Film Appreciation	W. Charles Everett	R.A.F. Uxbridge	London Services Education Committee
16	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
17	8.00 p.m.	Mass Media	Paddy Whannel	Glyn Grammar School, Ewell	Glyn Grammar School Parent-Teacher Association
17	7.40 p.m.	The Cinema Industry	W. Charles Everett	17th Co. W.R.A.C.	London Services Ed. Committee
18	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
21	7.00 p.m.	The Film and Social Problems	John Huntley	Oxford	City of Oxford Youth Film Society
21	7.30 p.m.	Analysis of "Shane"	Alan Lovell	Bexleyheath	Bexley Adult Education Centre
22	7.30 p.m.	Television and the Teacher	Paddy Whannel	University of Reading Institute of Education	University of Reading Institute of Education
23	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
23	7.30 p.m.	Film Appreciation	W. Charles Everett	West Malling R.A.F.	Kent Education Committee
24	8.00 p.m.	Film-Making for Amateurs	Matt McCarthy	Edgware	Broadfields Evening Institute
24	7.30 p.m.	Modern Cinematograph Techniques	Stanley Crawford	Stafford	Stafford Film Society (Members)
24	7.45 p.m.	Film Animation	Roger Manvell	Tunbridge Wells	Tunbridge Wells Film Society
25	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
25	7.30 p.m.	The Story of the Film	J. Griffin	Peterborough Adult Institute	Peterborough Adult Institute
27/28	Weekend	Film Appreciation	A. Howard Bush	Shropshire	Shropshire Education Committee (Youth Service)
29	7.30 p.m.	The Two Screens and Persuasion	Paddy Whannel	University of Reading Institute of Education	University of Reading Institute of Education

#### MARCH

2	8.00 p.m.	Film Appreciation	Stanley Reed	Kingsgate College, Broadstairs	Kingsgate College, Broadstairs
3	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
4	7.30 p.m.	Cartoon and Animated Films	John Halas	Newton-le-Willows Lancs	Newton-le-Willows Arts Assoc. Film Society
5	Half-day School	The Art of the Film	John Huntley	Downham Market Norfolk	University of Cambridge Board of Extra-Mural Studies



Date	Time	Subject	Speaker	Location	Organisation
6	7.30 p.m.	Analysis of "Sweet Smell of Success"	Paddy Whannel	Bexleyheath	Bexley Adult Education Centre
8	7.30 p.m.	Case History of a Film	W. Charles Everett	R.A.F. West Malling	Kent Education Committee
8	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
9	8.00 p.m.	Film-Making for Amateurs	Matt McCarthy	Edware	Broadfields Evening Institute
10	7.30 p.m.	The Story of a Film	J. Griffin	Peterborough Adult Institute	Peterborough Adult Institute
10	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
14	8.00 p.m.	The Making of a Film	W. Charles Everett	Blackheath	Blackheath Evening Townswomen's Guild
15	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
16	8.00 p.m.	Music and the Film	John Huntley	St. Albans	St. Albans Film Society (Members)
17	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
20	7.30 p.m.	Analysis of "Pajama Game"	Brian Groombridge	Bexleyheath	Bexley Adult Education Centre
22	7.30 p.m.	Film Appreciation	W. Charles Everett	R.A.F. West Malling	Kent Education Committee
22	7.00 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
23	8.00 p.m.	Film-Making for Amateurs	Matt McCarthy	Edware	Broadfields Evening Institute
24	7.30 p.m.	The Story of a Film	J. Griffin	Peterborough Adult Institute	Peterborough Adult Institute
24	7.00 p.m.	The Social Impact of the Cinema	Anthony Simmons	Bristol	Bristol Film Guild (Members)
24	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College
27	7.30 p.m.	Analysis of "Face in the Crowd"	Paddy Whannel	Bexleyheath	Bexley Adult Education Centre
28	Not yet fixed	Introduction to "Immortal Land"	Basil Wright	Newcastle-on-Tyne	Tyneside Film Society
29	7.30 p.m.	Narrow Gauge Cinematography	Matt McCarthy	Harrow Technical College	Harrow Technical College
31	7.30 p.m.	Films and Film-Making	Matt McCarthy	Hendon Technical College	Hendon Technical College

A proposed course of 12 weekly talks on "THE DEVELOPMENT, THE DREAMS and THE DECAY OF THE CINEMA" is under discussion for the Chiswick Polytechnic. It is hoped this class will be held on Wednesdays. The tutor will be Mr. Derrick Knight. Enquiries to Mr. C. Leonard, Chiswick Polytechnic, Bath Road, Chiswick.

#### UNIVERSITY OF LONDON EXTRA-MURAL CLASSES ON FILM HELD AT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE DURING THE WINTER AND SPRING

**Monday and Tuesday Evenings:** The Art of the Film.

*Lecturers:* Paddy Whannel (Monday); John Huntley (Tuesday). Time 7-9 p.m.

**Thursday and Friday Evenings:** The Scope and Development of Film Experiment in the Mid-Twentieth Century.

*Lecturers:* John Huntley, Paddy Whannel.

Both of the above courses are now fully enrolled.

### THE BOOK LIBRARY

During the next few months the Book Library is to be completely reorganised. This will involve the removal of many books from the shelves for short periods. We apologise for any inconvenience that this will cause but hope that it will ensure a better library service in the future.

The following books have recently been added to the library (Those marked with an asterisk are available for loan to members.)

- AGEL, Henri.—*Le Prêtre à l'écran*. Paris, Tequi édition. 1953.  
 BEZZOLA, Guido.—*Anna Magnani*. Parma, Guanda. 1958.  
 BIAMONTE, S.G. (ed.).—*Musica e film*. Rome, Edizioni dell'Ateneo. 1959.  
 BROZ, J. & FRIDA, M.—*Histoire Československého film v obrazech 1898-1931*. Prague, Orbis. 1959.  
 \*CASTELLO, G. C. & BERTIERI, (eds.).—*Venezia 1932-1939: filmografia critica*. Rome, Bianco e Nero. 1959.  
 EISNER, L. H. & FRIEDRICH, H. (eds.).—*Film Rundfunk Fernsehen*. Frankfurt am Main, Fischer Bucherei. 1958.  
 GIGLIO, Tommaso.—*Marilyn Monroe*. Parma, Guanda. 1956.  
 \*GROSSET, Philip.—*Making 8 mm. movies*. London, Fountain Press. 1959.  
 \*HACQUARD, Georges.—*La Musique et le cinéma*. Paris, Presses Universitaires. 1959.  
 \*HUGHES, Robert (ed.).—*Film: Book 1*. New York, Grove Press. 1959.  
 INSTITUT DES HAUTES ETUDES CINEMATOGRAPHIQUES.—*L'Enseignement de la réalisation: proceedings of the Ve. Congrès international des écoles de cinéma*. 1958.  
 INSTITUT DES HAUTES ETUDES CINEMATOGRAPHIQUES.—*L'Architecture-décoration dans le film: proceedings of the 2e. Congrès international des écoles de cinéma*. Paris. 1955.

- \*JEANNE, René & FORD, Charles.—*Histoire encyclopédique du cinéma, vol. IV.—le Cinéma parlant*. Paris, S.E.D.E. 1959.  
 JOHANN, Ernst (ed.).—*Kleine geschichte des films*. Frankfurt am Main, Ullstein Buch. 1959.  
 LACALMITA, Michele.—*Cinema e narrativa*. Rome, Bianco e Nero. 1959.  
 \*MARX, Groucho.—*Groucho and me*. London, Gollancz. 1959.  
 MEUNIER, Micheline.—*Un Acteur-poète: Jean Marais*. Paris, Editions Debresse. 1959.  
 \*MORE, Kenneth.—*Happy go lucky*. London, Robert Hale. 1959.  
 OTTAWAY, Robert (ed.).—*Picturegoer film annual. 1959-60*. London, Odhams. 1959.  
 PORNON, Charles.—*Le Rêve et le fantastique dans le cinéma français*. Paris, La Nef de Paris. 1959.  
 RENZI, Renzo.—*Federico Fellini*. Parma, Guanda. 1956.  
 \*SHARPS, Wallace S.—*Dictionary of cinematography and sound recording*. London, Fountain. 1959.  
 \*TABORI, Paul.—*Alexander Korda*. London, Oldbourne. 1959.  
 WELLAND, Mato.—*Maria Schell*. Vienna, Massimo-Verlag. 1959.  
 \*WILLIS, Ted.—*Woman in a dressing gown and other television plays*. London, Barrie & Rockliff. 1959.  
 \*WYAND, Paul.—*Useless if delayed*. London, Harrap. 1959.



# Sight and Sound

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**JANUARY 1959**

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**DECEMBER 1959**

*Volume 28*



# INDEX TO SIGHT AND SOUND

## JANUARY 1959—DECEMBER 1959

Volume 28 Nos. 1-4

### INDEX TO CONTRIBUTORS

	Page		Page
ANDERSON, Lindsay		KING, Nel	
<i>The Last Hurrah</i> (Film Review)	93	Preston Sturges	185
BRECHT, Bertolt		KNEALE, Nigel	86
An Address to Danish Worker Actors on the Art of Observation	131	Not Quite So Intimate	
BROOKS, Louise		KOZINTSEV, Grigory	156
Gish and Garbo: the executive war on stars	12	Deep Screen	
BUCK, Tony		KRISH, John	63
Periodicals (Book Review)	48	A Free Hand	
BUTLER, Dorothy		LAMBERT, Gavin	68
<i>Theatre Arts Publications in the United States, 1947-1952</i> (Book Review)	188	From a Hollywood Notebook	
CALMAN, Mel		LEE, Jack	63
Meeting with Harold Lloyd (In the Picture)	4	A Free Hand	
CAVANDER, Kenneth		LEYDA, Jay	74
<i>Wild Strawberries</i> (Film Review)	35	Eisenstein's <i>Bezhin Meadow</i>	
<i>The Immortal Land</i> (Film Review)	39	<i>Notes of a Film Director</i> , by Sergei Eisenstein (Book Review)	188
<i>The Horse's Mouth</i> (Film Review)	89	McMANIGAL, Rod	
<i>The Nun's Story</i> (Film Review)	170	<i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> (Film Review)	36
<i>Anatomy of a Murder</i> (Film Review)	171	<i>Middle of the Night</i> (Film Review)	169
CLAYTON, Jack		MARCORELLES, Louis	
A Free Hand	60	André Bazin	30
DAVIES, Brenda		Two New Directors: <i>Paris Nous Appartient</i>	34
<i>The Devil's Disciple</i> (Film Review)	172	Paris Notes (In the Picture)	66, 135
DONNER, Clive		<i>Les Cousins</i> (Film Review)	169
A Free Hand	60	MARTIN, André	
DYER, Peter John		Animated Cinema: the Way Forward	80
Rediscovery (3): The Decline of a Mandarin	44	MEKAS, Jonas	
<i>Separate Tables</i> (Film Review)	92	New York Letter: towards a Spontaneous Cinema	118
<i>The Doctor's Dilemma</i> (Film Review)	94	MICHALEK, Boleslaw	
<i>The Black Orchid</i> (Film Review)	94	Polish Notes (In the Picture)	5
<i>Ashes and Diamonds</i> (Film Review)	166	Warsaw Notes (In the Picture)	135
<i>Some Like it Hot</i> (Film Review)	173	MOSKOWITZ, Gene	
<i>Stakeout on Dope Street and The Young Captives</i> (Film Reviews)	174	The Tight Close-Up	126
GILLET, John		OAKES, Philip	
The Best at Brussels	18	James Cagney	24
<i>The Inn of the Sixth Happiness</i> (Film Review)	38	<i>My Story</i> , by Mary Astor and <i>First Person Plural</i> , by Dagmar Godowsky (Book Reviews)	187
Censored (In the Picture)	65	POWELL, Dilys	
The Festivals: Cannes	138	<i>The Slide Area</i> , by Gavin Lambert (Book Review)	186
The Survivors	150	PROUSE, Derek	
GRENIER, Cynthia		Yugoslav Cartoons (In the Picture)	136
<i>The Old Man and the Sea</i> (Film Review)	39	The Festivals: Berlin	137
GRIGS, Derrick		<i>The Face</i> (Film Review)	167
<i>International Film Annual No. 2</i> , Edited by William Whitebait (Book Review)	47	RICHARDSON, Tony	
HAMER, Robert		A Free Hand	64
A Free Hand	61	ROBINSON, David	
HAWKINS, Robert		<i>Scandal and Parade, the Theatre of Jean Cocteau</i> , by Neal Oxenhandler (Book Review)	47
Rome Commentary (In the Picture)	134	<i>Television and the Child</i> , by Hilde T. Himmelweit, A. N. Oppenheim, Pamela Vince (Book Review)	100
HILDESLEY, Charles		Look Back in Anger	122
Cross Channel	41	<i>The Scapegoat</i> (Film Review)	172
HILL, Derek		ROTHA, Paul	
The Face of Horror	6	A Free Hand	64
<i>Virgin Island</i> (Film Review)	40	ROUD, Richard	
<i>The Man Upstairs</i> (Film Review)	40	Face to Face: James Agee	98
<i>The Roots of Heaven</i> (Film Review)	94	The Cinémathèque Revisited (In the Picture)	136
Topical Television	95	<i>Le Amiche</i> (Film Review)	171
<i>The Rabbit Trap</i> (Film Review)	173	Face to Face: André Bazin	176
<i>Refuge England and Enginemen</i> (Film Reviews)	174	SADOUL, Georges	
Defence through FIDO	183	Notes on a New Generation	111
HOGGART, Richard		STONIER, G. W.	
We are the Lambeth Boys	164	Preston Sturges	185
HOLT, Seth		TAYLOR, Russell	
A Free Hand	62	Encounter with Siodmak	180
HOUSTON, Penelope		ULRICHSEN, Erik	
Two New Directors: <i>Look Back in Anger</i>	31	Bergman's New Film (In the Picture)	66
<i>Nowhere to Go</i> (Film Review)	38	VAS, Robert	
<i>Bell, Book and Candle</i> (Film Review)	40	<i>Paprika</i> and <i>A Sunday Romance</i> (Film Reviews)	92
Room at the Top	56	<i>Power Among Men</i> (Film Review)	175
<i>March to Aldermaston</i> (Film Review)	89	VAUGHAN, Dai	
<i>The 39 Steps</i> (Film Review)	94	<i>A Matter of Dignity</i> (Film Review)	37
The Festivals: Venice	142	VAUGHAN, David	
Conscience and Comedy	161	<i>Gigi</i> (Film Review)	90
<i>North by Northwest</i> (Film Review)	168	VIOLA, Wilhelm	
<i>Ask Any Girl</i> (Film Review)	173	<i>Von Rossellini zu Fellini</i> , by Martin Schlappner (Book Review)	101
JACKSON, Pat		WILLIAMS, Richard	
A Free Hand	62	<i>The Technique of Film Animation</i> , by John Halas and Roger Manvell (Book Review)	188
JOHNSON, Albert		MISCELLANEOUS:	
<i>What Lola Wants</i> (Film Review)	36	The Festivals: London	21
Hollywood Report (In the Picture)	66	Cinema and Television: Jean Renoir and Roberto Rossellini interviewed by André Bazin	26
Sounds from the Westertoren	78	Visconti interviewed by Jacques Doniol-Valcroze and Jean Domarchi	144
<i>Anna Lucasta</i> (Film Review)	91		



## INDEX TO FILM TITLES

- A Bout de Souffle, 135  
 Abraham Lincoln, 44, 45, 46  
 Admiral Halsey Story, The, 25  
 A Double Tour, 135, 143  
 Adventures of an October Child, The, 157  
 Adventures of an \*, The, 83  
 Afraid to Live, 106  
 African Queen, The, 99  
 Age d'Or, L', 19  
 Alcatraz Circus, 84  
 Alexander Nevsky, 188  
 All Quiet on the Western Front, 155  
 Alone (Grigory Kozintsev), 157  
 Alone (cartoon), 136  
 Alpine Climbers, 82  
 Amants, Les, 21, 55, 65, 178  
 America, 45  
 American in Paris, An, 91  
 Amiche, Le, 171  
 Amici per la Pelle, 134  
 Anatomy of a Murder, 119, 142, 171, 192  
 Anastasia, 11  
 Andy Hardy Comes Home, 52  
 Animals and Brigands, 80  
 Animated Genesis, 81  
 Anna, 140  
 Anna Christie, 69  
 Anna Cross, The, 20  
 Anna Lucasta, 91  
 Annie Laurie, 16  
 A Nous la Liberté, 19  
 Ansiktet, *see* The Face  
 Aparajito, 3, 142  
 Apartment, The, 134  
 Araya, 141  
 Arms and the Man, 138  
 Around the World in 80 Days, 52, 106  
 Around the World With Nothing On, 106  
 Arsenal, 19  
 Arsène Lupin, 3  
 Ashes and Diamonds, 5, 135, 140, 166, 174  
 Ask Any Girl, 173, 192  
 As You Desire Me, 69  
 At a High Price, 143  
 Atalante, L', 19, 99  
 At Midnight, 22  
 Atonement of Gosta Berling, The, 15, 17  
 Auntie Mame, 106  
 Avenger, The, 136  
 Avventura, L', 134  
  
 Babette Goes to War, 142  
 Bachelor Party, 3, 128, 160  
 Bajaja, 81  
 Bandwagon, The, 90  
 Barbarian and the Geisha, The, 71  
 Bataille du Rail, 99  
 Battle of San Pietro, The, 20  
 Battle of Stalingrad, The, 30  
 Battleship Potemkin, 10, 18, 75, 159, 160, 188  
 Beach, The, (El Sequestrador), 22  
 Beast from 20,000 Fathoms, The, 8  
 Beat the Devil, 58  
 Beau Brummel, 46  
 Beau Serge, Le, 3, 22, 34, 115, 116, 143, 169, 170  
 Beggar's Opera, The, 32  
 Behemoth The Sea Monster (*former title*: The Giant Behemoth), 11  
 Behind the Mask, 11  
 Bel Age, Le, 135  
 Bell, Book and Candle, 40, 52  
 Belle et la Bête, La, 34  
 Bellissima, 145, 146  
 Bells are Ringing, The, 66  
 Bespoke Overcoat, The, 58  
 Best Years of Our Lives, The, 98, 151  
 Bezhin Meadow, 74  
 Bicycle Thieves, 18, 88, 147, 159, 160  
 Big Country, The, 52, 154  
 Big Fear, The, 136  
 Birth of a Baby, The, 11  
 Birth of a Nation, 44, 190  
 Black Orchid, The, 94, 106  
 Blind Date, 192  
 Blinkity Blank, 84  
 Blitzkrieg, 4  
 Blob, The, 6  
 Blood of the Vampire, 9, 11  
 Blue Angel, The, 192  
 Blue Jeans, 192  
 Blue Pattern, 84  
 Boastful Knight, The, 84  
 Bohème, La, 16, 17  
 Bonjour Tristesse, 71, 84  
 Boomerang, 152  
 Boudu Sauvé des Eaux, 135  
 Boundary Lines, 83  
 Boy and the Bridge, The, 192  
 Bravados, The, 154  
 Broken Blossoms, 45, 190  
 Brothers Karamazov, The, 3  
 Buccaneer, The, 69  
 Burmese Harp, The, 50, 142, 184  
  
 Camille, 69  
 Camp on Blood Island, The, 10  
 Canal Builders, The, 142  
 Canary Murder Case, The, 13  
 Captain Buffalo, 136  
 Carefree, 184  
 Cargaison Blanche, 180  
 Carlton-Browne of the F.O., 106  
 Carmen Jones, 11  
 Carnival in Costa Rica, 98  
 Carry on, Nurse, 109  
 Case Against Brooklyn, The, 119  
 Casque d'Or, 42  
 Cat and Mouse, 67  
 Catbird Seat, The, 134  
 Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, 3, 36, 69  
 Celery Stalks at Midnight, 85  
 Certain Smile, A, 71  
 Chansons sans Paroles, 84  
 Chapaev, 159  
 Chienne, La, 144  
 Childhood of Maxim Gorki, The, 19  
 Christmas Holiday, 181  
 Christmas in July, 185  
 Christopher Crumpet, 82  
 Circarama, 20  
 Citizen Kane, 18, 30, 88, 178  
 City Lights, 18  
 City of Spades, 64, 134  
 Clint Cobber (series), 83  
 Cloak, The, 157  
 Clock Cleaners, 82  
 Cobweb, The, 90  
 Cobra Woman, 181  
 Come Back Africa, 119, 120, 143  
 Commissar Comes Home, The, 81  
 Compulsion, 106  
 Concerto for Sub-Machine Gun, 136  
 Conflagration, *see* Enjo  
 Conquest, 69  
 Corner in Wheat, A, 45  
 Coup du Berger, La, 34  
 Cousins, Les, 67, 115, 116, 138, 169  
 Couteau dans la Plaie, Le, 67  
 Covered Wagon, The, 45  
 Coward, The, 44  
 Cowboy, 84  
 Cradle of Genius, 67  
 Cranes are Flying, The, 3, 50, 52  
 Creation of the World, The, 81  
 Crime and Punishment—U.S.A., 66, 119, 143  
 Cronaca di un Amore, 171  
 Crossfire, 152  
 Cruel Sea, The, 42  
 Cry Baby Killer, 71, 119  
 Cry from the Streets, A, 142  
 Cry of Jazz, The, 119, 121  
 Cry of the City, 180  
 Cry Tough, 119  
 Curse of Frankenstein, The, 8, 9  
  
 Dames du Bois de Boulogne, Les, 19, 171  
 Danger Within, 106  
 Dante's Inferno, 46  
 Dark Mirror, The, 180  
 Day of the Outlaw, 174  
 Day Will Dawn, A, 142  
 Dead End, 153  
 Defiant Ones, The, 3, 70  
 Déjeuner sur l'Herbe, Le, 135  
 Delinquents, The, 119  
 Dernières Vacances, Les, 176  
 Desistfilm, 120  
 Désordres, 112  
 Destiny of a Man, 140, 142  
 Devil Bear, The, 49  
 Devil is a Woman, The, 143  
 Devil's Disciple, The, 172, 192  
 Diary of a Chambermaid, The, 27  
 Diary of a Lost Girl, 13  
 Diary of Anne Frank, The, 79, 142, 153  
 Diary of Major Thompson, The, 185  
 Divertissement Rococo, 85  
 Doctor's Dilemma, The, 94, 106, 172  
 Dolce Vita, La, 134  
 Dollar Dance, 84  
 Don Quixote, 3, 50, 143, 157  
 Double Indemnity, 134  
 Douce, 99  
 Down Went McGinty, 185  
 Dracula, 9, 190  
 Dragueurs, Les, 140  
 Dream Street, 45  
 Dreigroschenoper, Der, 19  
 Drop Too Much, A, 84  
 Dunkirk, 3  
  
 Earth, 18, 19, 158  
 Eau à la Bouche, L', 135  
 El, 141  
 Elena et les Hommes, 135  
 Elle Court, 84  
 End of St. Petersburg, The, 157  
 Enemy, The, 16  
 Enginemen, 174  
 Enjo (Conflagration), 142  
 En Passant, 85  
 Entertainer, The, 32, 58, 59, 64, 88, 134



Erotikon, 144  
 Espoir, 179  
 Estate Violent, L', 134  
 Et Dieu créa la Femme, 67  
 Eva Wants to Sleep, 23, 52, 106  
 Every Day Except Christmas, 32, 174  
  
 Face, The (Ansiktet), 66, 134, 142, 167, 192  
 Face to Face, 99  
 Fall, The, 138  
 Fall of Berlin, The, 30  
 Fanatiques, Les, 34  
 Farewell to Arms, A, 153  
 Farrebique, 99  
 Fear Strikes Out, 130  
 Ferry to Hong Kong, 5  
 Feu de Paille, 186  
 Fiend Who Walked the West, The, 10  
 Fiend Without a Face, 9, 109  
 Fièvre Monte à El Pao, La, 136  
 Fils de l'Eau, Les, 112  
 Fires Were Started, 19  
 Five for Four, 84  
 Five Pennies, The, 192  
 Flat Hatting, 83  
 Flebus, 82, 83  
 Floods of Fear, 52  
 Fly, The, 7, 9, 11  
 Fortunella, 106  
 Forty-First, The, 20  
 Fountainhead, The, 153  
 Fourteen Hours, 40, 71  
 Frankenstein 1970, 9  
 Free Radicals, 85  
 French Cancan, 34  
 Fudget's Budget, 82  
 Fugitive Kind, The, 136  
 Fumées, 85  
 Funny Face, 37  
  
 Gerald McBoing Boing, 81, 82  
 General, The, 19  
 General della Rovere, 134, 142  
 Generation A, 5, 166  
 Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, 16  
 German Story, The, 4  
 Giant, 153  
 Gideon's Day, 93  
 Gidget, 192  
 Gigt, 67, 90, 106, 192  
 Girl in Black, A, 37  
 Girl in Every Port, A, 13  
 Girls at Sea, 52  
 Give a Girl a Break, 36  
 Goddess, The, 3, 169  
 God's Little Acre, 70, 71  
 Goha, 23, 52, 106, 112  
 Gold Rush, The, 18, 159, 160  
 Grande Guerra, La, 143  
 Grande Illusion, La, 18, 19, 28, 52, 89, 106, 135, 159  
 Grand Jeu, Le, 182  
 Grapes of Wrath, The, 19, 153  
 Great Dictator, The, 52  
 Great Sinner, The, 182  
 Greed, 15, 18, 19, 178  
 Green Mansions, 192  
 Grido, Il, 171  
 Grip of the Strangler, The, 9, 11  
 Guernica, 114, 115  
 Guns of Navarone, The, 136  
  
 Hail, the Conquering Hero, 185  
 Halls of Montezuma, The, 155  
 Ham and Hattie (series), 82  
 Hamlet, 42, 99  
 Hamnstad, 67  
 Hanging Tree, The, 106  
 Hangman, The, 153  
 Happy End, 81  
 Have I Told You Lately?, 121  
 Heaven and Earth, 134  
 Heaven and Hell, 82  
 H.8, 22  
 Hell's Heroes, 134  
 Hen Hop, 84  
 Henry V, 99  
 Hidden Fortress, The, 137, 143  
 High School Big Shot, 119  
 High School Confidential, 106  
 High Tide at Noon, 59  
 Hintertreppe, 20  
 Hiroshima mon Amour, 111, 115, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143  
 History of the Cinema, The, 82  
 Hole in the Head, A, 151, 154  
 Holiday on Sylt, 4  
 Home Before Dark, 52, 69, 70, 127  
 Horse's Mouth, The, 58, 61, 73, 89, 106  
 Horse Soldiers, The, 69, 154, 192  
 Hot Car Girl, 71, 72, 119  
 Hôtel des Invalides, 19, 114  
 Hound of the Baskervilles, The, 106  
 Houseboat, 52  
 House of the Angel, The, 22, 138  
 House Under the Rocks, The, 143  
 House Where I Live, The, 23  
 Huff and Puff, 81, 82  
 Hunchback of Notre Dame, The, 14  
  
 I Am a Camera, 58  
 Ice Cold in Alex, 3  
 I Confess, 170  
 Ikiru, 19  
 Ilya Muromets, 23  
 I'm All Right, Jack, 162, 163, 192  
 I Married a Monster from Outer Space, 6  
 Immortal Land, The, 39, 102  
 In a Meadow, 81  
 India, 29, 141  
 Indiscreet, 3  
 Ingmar's Sons, 46  
 Inn of the Sixth Happiness, The, 38, 52  
 Intolerance, 18, 44, 45, 46, 190  
 Intruder in the Dust, 152  
 Invention of Destruction, An, 85  
 I Only Arsked, 52  
 Iron Flower, The (Paprika), 92, 106  
 Island in the Sun, 71, 91  
 Isn't Life Wonderful?, 44, 45, 47  
 Italian Straw Hat, An, 186  
 It's a Crime, 81  
 It's Love I'm After, 69  
 Ivan the Terrible, 3, 20, 74, 141, 184, 188  
 I Want to Live, 65, 69, 70, 153, 192  
 I Was Monty's Double, 52  
  
 J'Accuse, 114  
 Jack the Ripper, 11, 192  
 Jalsaghar, 143  
 Jamestown Balloos, 85  
 Jet Stream, 192  
 Joconde, La, 85  
 John Paul Jones, 192  
 Journal d'un Curé de Campagne, Le, 178  
 Journey, The, 152  
 Jour se Lève, Le, 40  
 Joyless Street, The, 45  
 Juggler of Our Lady, The, 83  
  
 Kanal, 3, 5, 135, 166  
 Key, The, 3, 32  
 Kidnappers, The, 59  
 Killers, The, 182  
 King in New York, A, 159, 161  
 King's Row, 69  
 Kitty Foyle, 69  
 Knave of Hearts, 32  
 Krzycz Walecznych, 136  
  
 Lady Eve, The, 185  
 Land Without Bread, 175  
 Lanterna Magica, 20  
 Last Day of Summer, The, 23  
 Last Hurrah, The, 52, 69, 93, 154  
 Last Judgment Begins at Six O'Clock, The, 134  
 Last Laugh, The, 18  
 Last Mile, The, 192  
 Last Train from Gun Hill, 192  
 Legend of Narayama, The, 22  
 Left, Right and Centre, 162  
 Liaisons Dangereuses, Les, 67  
 Liane, Jungle Goddess, 106  
 Life in Emergency Ward Ten, 11, 106  
 Limelight, 73  
 Lion and the Song, The, 84  
 Little Brother, 157  
 Little Dog and the Little Cat, The, 81  
 Little Dramas, 140  
 Little Foxes, The, 30  
 Little Fugitive, The, 119  
 Little Island, The, 3, 83  
 Little Umbrella, The, 84  
 Live Like Pigs, 58  
 Lonesome Ghost, 82  
 Lonesome One, The, 81  
 Long and the Short and the Tall, The, 58, 63  
 Long Hot Summer, The, 66  
 Look Back in Anger, 31, 58, 59, 61, 64, 88, 109, 110, 122, 124, 133, 134  
 Lord of the Flies, 58  
 Lords of the Jungle, The, 142  
 Lotna, 135  
 Louisiana Story, 135  
 Love, 17  
 Love in the Afternoon, 134, 173  
 Love is My Profession, 52  
 Lovers and Lollipops, 119  
 Love's Crucible, 46  
 Luchian War, The, 21  
 Lucky Jim, 56  
 Lust for Life, 90  
  
 Madeline, 81, 82  
 Magic Mirror, The, 20  
 Magliari, I, 134  
 Magnificent Ambersons, The, 19  
 Maigret Sets a Trap, 152  
 Main Street, 160  
 Maitres Fous, Les, 112, 114  
 Man in the Grey Flannel Suit, The, 30  
 Man is Ten Feet Tall, A, 91  
 Man of the West, 52  
 Man Upstairs, The, 40, 59  
 Man Who Knew Too Much, The, 94  
 March to Aldermaston, 89, 106  
 Mardi Gras, 52  
 Marseillaise, La, 116  
 Marty, 59, 93, 128, 173



Maternelle, La, 186  
 Matter of Dignity, A, 23, 37, 106  
 Maudite soit la Guerre, 20  
 Me and the Colonel, 52  
 Medium, The, 4  
 Meet Me in St. Louis, 90  
 Menschen am Sonntag, 180, 181  
 Mer et les Jours, La, 111  
 Merle, Le, 84  
 Merry Go Round, 92  
 Merry Widow, The, 15  
 Messenger of the People, A, 142  
 Metropolitan, 85  
 Middle of the Night, 119, 169  
 Midsummer Night's Dream, A, 81, 140  
 Million, Le, 186  
 Miracle of Morgan's Creek, The, 185  
 Mister Flow, 180  
 Mistons, Les, 67, 116  
 Moby Dick, 32  
 Modern Times, 162  
 Moi, un Noir, 112  
 Mamma Don't Allow, 32  
 Mon Oncle, 34, 162, 192  
 Monsieur Beaucaire, 46  
 Monsieur Verdoux, 99  
 Mort du Cygne, La, 186  
 Morte di un Amico, 134  
 Mort en Fraude, 111  
 Mother, 18, 159, 160  
 Moulin Rouge, 32, 58  
 Mouse Hunters, 82  
 Mouse that Roared, The, 5, 162, 163  
 Muhomatsu, the Rickshaw Man, 22  
 My Darling Clementine, 69  
 My Sister Eileen, 36  
 My Son John, 153  
 Mystère Picasso, Le, 21  
 My Twelve Fathers, 81  
  
 Naked Maja, The, 192  
 Nanook of the North, 178  
 Nazarin, 141, 143  
 Never Steal Anything Small, 25  
 New Babylon, The, 157  
 Night in a Harem, A, 109  
 Night of the Hunter, The, 99  
 Night on a Bare Mountain, 85  
 Nights of Cabiria, 3, 101, 160  
 Nine Lives, 50  
 Nocturne, 81  
 No Resting Place, 67  
 North by Northwest, 154, 168, 192  
 Notorious, 168  
 No Trees in the Street, 56, 106  
 Notte Brava, La, 134  
 Notti Bianchi, 3, 145  
 Nowhere to Go, 38, 52  
 Now Voyager, 92  
 Nudist Paradise, 106  
 Nuit et Brouillard, 19, 114, 115  
 Nun's Story, The, 153, 170, 192  
  
 Of Mice and Men, 69  
 Oklahoma, 36  
 Old Dark House, The, 167  
 Old Man and the Sea, The, 23, 39, 52  
 Old Czech Legends, 81  
 Olvidados, Los, 22  
 Once Upon a Time, 84, 85  
 One Exciting Night, 45  
 One Romantic Night, 13  
 On the Bowery, 119, 120  
 On the Waterfront, 10  
 Open City, 99, 101, 134  
 Operation Teutonic Sword, 4, 55, 65  
 Orders to Kill, 3, 50  
 Orfeu Negro, 111, 112, 138  
 Orphans of the Storm, 44, 45, 47  
 Ossessione, 101, 144, 145  
 Our Man in Havana, 5  
 Out, 175  
 Overture, 175  
  
 Paiza, 101, 136  
 Pajama Game, The, 36  
 Pal Joey, 36  
 Palm Beach Story, The, 185, 186  
 Pandora's Box, 13  
 Paprika, *see* The Iron Flower  
 Parents Terribles, Les, 178  
 Paris la Nuit, 112  
 Paris 1900, 114  
 Paris Nous Appartient, 34, 135  
 Partie de Campagne, 19, 99, 144, 178  
 Party Crashers, The, 72, 119  
 Party Girl, 69  
 Passion, 14  
 Passion de Jeanne d'Arc, La, 18, 19, 159  
 Pasteur, 186  
 Pather Panchali, 19, 50  
 Paths of Glory, 70, 73  
 Patrouille de Choc, 114  
 Patterns of Power, 128  
 Peau de Pêche, 186  
 Performing Painter, 84  
 Peter Ibbetson, 19  
 Peyton Place, 3  
  
 Phantom Lady, 180  
 Pickpocket, The, 136  
 Picture in Your Minds, 83  
 Piece of Land, A, 92  
 Pièges, 180  
 Pirate, The, 90  
 Place in the Sun, A, 56, 153  
 Poisson Rouge, Le, 111  
 Porgy and Bess, 153  
 Pork Chop Hill, 155  
 Porte des Lilas, 50  
 Poussières, 114  
 Power Among Men, 4, 143, 175  
 Premiere, The, 81, 136  
 Pride and the Passion, The, 84  
 Prison, 67  
 Prix de Beauté, 13  
 Public Enemy, 25  
 Pull My Daisy, 119, 120  
  
 Quatorze Juillet, 19  
 Quatre Cents Coups, Les, 34, 111, 116, 138, 140, 143, 179  
 Que Viva Mexico!, 3, 74, 159  
 Quiet Flows the Don, 3  
 Quiet Man, The, 73  
  
 Rabbit Trap, The, 173, 192  
 Raffles sur la Ville, 106  
 Rally Round the Flag, Boys, 127  
 Rashomon, 19, 32, 143  
 Rat Race, The, 130  
 Ratten, Die, 182  
 Rebecca, 69  
 Rebel Without a Cause, 72  
 Reckless Moment, The, 69  
 Red Badge of Courage, The, 46  
 Refuge England, 174  
 Régates de San Francisco, Les, 135  
 Règle du Jeu, La, 18, 22, 135, 143  
 Reluctant Debutante, The, 52  
 Remarkable Mr. Pennypacker, The, 52  
 Rest is Silence, The, 137  
 Retour, Le, 20  
 Return of Maxim, The, 157  
 Revenge of Frankenstein, The, 7, 9, 11  
 Rhythm, 85  
 Rhythmic, 84  
 Richard III, 167  
 Rio Bravo, 154  
 Riot in Cell Block 11, 153  
 Riso Amaro, 101  
 Rocco and his Brothers, 134, 144  
 Romance of Transportation, The, 81  
 Romola, 16  
 Room at the Top, 56, 61, 106, 109, 133, 138, 142, 179  
 Roots of Heaven, The, 94  
 Rooty Toot Toot, 83  
 Rope, 130  
 Rough and the Smooth, The, 180, 182  
 Ruby Gentry, 153  
  
 Safety Last, 4  
 Sailor Beware, 58  
 Salvage Gang, The, 63  
 Salvation Hunters, The, 15  
 Sang des Bêtes, Le, 114  
 Saturday Night and Sunday Morning, 134  
 Savage Eye, The, 143  
 Savage Innocents, 136  
 Sawdust and Tinsel, 66  
 Sayonara, 71  
 Scapegoat, The, 172  
 Scarlet Letter, The, 16, 17, 44, 46  
 Secrets of the Soul, 20  
 Senso, 145, 147  
 Separate Tables, 92, 106  
 Sequestrador, El, *see* The Beach  
 Set Up, The, 152  
 Sève de la Terre, 85  
 Seven Arts, 83  
 Seven Samurai, The, 137  
 Seventh Seal, The, 3, 35, 66  
 Seventh Veil, The, 183  
 Seven Wonders of the World, The, 52, 106, 192  
 Seven Year Itch, The, 11  
 Sfida, La, 23  
 Shadow of a Doubt, 99  
 Shadows, 119, 120  
 Shake Hands with the Devil, 25  
 Sheik, The, 14  
 Sheriff of Fractured Jaw, The, 52  
 Sherlock Jnr., 19  
 Short and Sweet, 85  
 Short Cut to Hell, 25  
 Short History, A, 83  
 Short Vision, A, 81  
 Siege of Pinchgut, The, 192  
 Signe du Lion, Le, 135  
 Sinbad the Sailor, 84  
 Sinners' Holiday, 25  
 Sleeping Beauty, The, 127, 192  
 Sleepless Years, The, 143  
 Smiles of a Summer Night, 19  
 Smugglers, The, 22  
 Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, 80, 127  
 So Close to Life, 143  
 So ist das Leben, 20  
 Some Came Running, 106



Some Like It Hot, 134, 155, 173  
 Someone to Remember, 180  
 Song of the Rivers, 65  
 Son of Dracula, 181  
 Sorrows of Satan, The, 14  
 Sound and the Fury, The, 66  
 South Pacific, 3, 37, 52, 69, 106, 192  
 Spartacus, 136  
 Spiral Staircase, The, 180  
 Spring in Park Lane, 109  
 Stagecoach, 137  
 Stage Struck, 129, 130  
 Stain on the Snow, 52  
 Stake Out on Dope Street, 119, 174  
 Star is Born, A, 152  
 Stars, 143  
 State of the Union, 93, 152  
 Statues Meurent Aussi, Les, 114  
 Stella, 37  
 Stepbrothers, 160  
 Story of Esther Costello, The, 58  
 Story of G.I. Joe, The, 99  
 Story of Louis Pasteur, The, 69  
 Strada, La, 101, 167  
 Strangers on a Train, 170  
 Struggle, The, 46  
 Suddenly, Last Summer, 149  
 Sullivan's Travels, 185, 186  
 Summer with Monika, 52  
 Sun Also Rises, The, 71  
 Sunday Junction, 118  
 Sunday Romance, A, 92, 106, 140  
 Sun Shines Bright, The, 93  
 Suspect, The, 180, 181  
  
 Tale of Chan-Hyang, The, 142  
 Taste of Honey, A, 58, 64  
 T-Bird Gang, The, 119  
 Tell-Tale Heart, The, 83  
 Temptress, The, 16, 17  
 Ten Commandments, The, 71  
 Tender Game, The, 83  
 Tennessee Johnson, 99  
 Terminus Love, 23  
 Terra Trema, La, 19, 145, 147  
 Testament of Dr. Cordelier, The, 143  
 Tete contre les Murs, La, 114, 135, 140  
 That Kind of Woman, 130  
 Them!, 8  
 These Thousand Hills, 106  
 They Live By Night, 73  
 Thing, The, 8  
 Thirst, 67  
 39 Steps, The (Hitchcock), 168  
 39 Steps, The (Ralph Thomas), 94, 106  
 This Earth is Mine!, 154  
 This Gun for Hire, 25  
 Three Men in a Boat, 58  
 Throne of Blood, 22  
 Tiger Bay, 5  
 Time Out of Mind, 182  
 Time Out of War, A, 66  
 Tirez sur le Pianiste, 135  
 Tobacco Road, 71  
 Tokyo Story, The, 19, 21  
 Tol'able David, 19, 154  
 Tom thumb, 52  
 Toni, 135  
 Too Many Girls, 36  
 Torero, 3, 55  
 Torrent, The, 15, 17  
 Tosca, La, 144  
 Touch of Evil, 3  
 Train Without Timetable, 140, 143  
 Tricheurs, Les, 67, 116, 138  
 Tripes au Soleil, Les, 114  
 Trollenberg Terror, The, 9  
 Trouble with Harry, The, 173  
 True Heart Susie, 45  
 Twelve Angry Men, 3, 129, 130  
 Two Bagatelles, 84  
 Two Eyes, Twelve Hands, 23  
 Two Men and a Wardrobe, 3  
 Typhoon, The, 44  
  
 Ugetsu Monogatari, 19  
 Umberto D., 134  
 Uncle Harry, 180, 181  
 Underworld, 19  
 Unicorn in the Garden, The, 81  
 Unknown Soldier, The, 3  
 Upstairs and Downstairs, 192  
  
 Van Gogh, 114  
 Vanina, 20  
 Vanishing Virginian, The, 69  
 Vertigo, 3, 168  
 Viborg Side, The, 157  
 Vie, Une, 178  
 Vikings, The, 10  
 Virgin Island, 40  
 Vitelloni, I, 42, 101, 171  
 Voix Humaine, La, 27  
  
 Wagonmaster, 154  
 Walk in the Sun, A, 19, 155  
 War and Peace, 153  
 War of the Worlds, 8

Watch the Birdie, 85  
 Way Down East, 44, 45, 47, 190  
 We are the Lambeth Boys, 164, 174  
 Wedding Breakfast, 169  
 Weddings and Babies, 119  
 We, the Infant Prodigies, 142  
 What Lola Wants, 36, 52  
 White Heron, The, 141  
 White Rose, The, 45  
 Why Dogs Scratch the Earth, 81  
 Wicked Woman, A, 49  
 Wild One, The, 167  
 Wild Strawberries, 3, 23, 35, 52, 66  
 Wind, The, 15, 16  
 Windjammer, 69  
 Wolf Trap, The, 23  
 Woman in a Dressing Gown, 56  
 Woman of Paris, A, 15, 44  
 Word, The, 67  
 World of Apu, The, 142, 143  
 World, the Flesh and the Devil, The, 192  
 Wrath of the Gods, The, 44  
  
 Yank at Oxford, A, 49  
 Yellow Beak, 82  
 Yesterday's Enemy, 192  
 You Can't Take It With You, 151  
 Young Captives, The, 174  
 Young Lions, The, 3, 71  
 Young Mr. Lincoln, The, 154  
 Young Stranger, The, 129  
 Youth of Maxim, The, 157  
  
 Zéro de Conduite, 99, 116  
 Zvenigora, 188

### Television Programmes

A la découverte des Français, 42  
 A Vous de Juger, 42  
 Big Deal, The, (play), 169  
 Brains Trust, The, 97  
 Cinema Today, The, 97  
 Cinepanorama, 42  
 Do the French Like Us?, 97  
 Eye on Research, 97  
 Face to Face, 96  
 For Whom the Bell Tolls (play), 129  
 Four Just Men, The, 67  
 Free Speech, 97  
 Lifeline, 96  
 Look In, 95, 97  
 Man on the Mountain Top, The (play), 128  
 Monitor, 95, 103  
 Mother, The (play), 169  
 My Lost Saints (play), 128  
 New Horizons, 95, 96, 97  
 Nineteen Eighty-Four (play), 87  
 Noon on Doomsday (play), 128  
 Old MacDonald Had a Curve (play), 128  
 O.S.S., 182  
 Panorama, 95, 96, 97  
 Patterns (play), 128  
 Press Conference, 96  
 Printer's Measure (play), 169  
 Quatermass (series), 59, 86  
 Quatermass and the Pit, 87  
 Rabbit Trap, The (play), 128  
 Rack, The (play), 128  
 Right to Reply, 95, 97  
 Robin Hood, 67  
 Roving Report, 95, 97  
 Science is News, 97  
 Second Enquiry, 96  
 Seven Lively Arts, The, 84  
 Si c'était vous, 42  
 Small World, 96, 97  
 Special Enquiry, 96  
 Strike (play), 128  
 Success Story, 96  
 This Week, 4, 10, 95, 96, 97  
 Thunder on Sycamore Street (play), 128  
 Tonight, 95, 97  
 Twentieth Century, The, 84  
 Under Fire, 95, 97  
 Visit to a Small Planet (play), 128  
 Wagon Train, 95  
 We Want An Answer, 95  
 What Every Woman Knows (play), 130  
 What the Papers Say, 96, 97  
 Who Cares?, 97  
 Who Goes Home?, 95, 97  
 Young Lady of Property, A (play), 128

## INDEX TO ILLUSTRATIONS (Film Titles and Personalities)

Abraham Lincoln, 44  
 Adventures of an \*, 82  
 Agee, James, 98  
 Amants, Les, 21  
 Amiche, Le, 171  
 Anatomy of a Murder, 172  
 Araya, 140  
 Ashes and Diamonds, 5, 167



- Ask Any Girl, 174  
*Astruc, Alexandre*, 176
- Baratier, Jacques*, 110  
*Bazin, André*, 30, 176  
*Bezhin Meadow*, 77  
*Bonjour Tristesse*, 85  
*Bresson, Robert*, 30  
*Brooks, Louise*, 12  
*Bunuel, Luis*, 139
- Cagney, James*, 24, 25  
*Camus, Marcel*, 110, 111  
*Cassavetes, John*, 119  
*Chabrol, Claude*, 110  
*Chapaev*, 156  
*Chaplin, Charles*, 18  
*Chayefsky, Paddy*, 127  
*Clayton, Jack*, 61  
*Clift, Montgomery*, 149  
*Cooper, Gary*, 136  
*Corso, Gregory*, 118  
*Cousins, Les*, 116  
*Crime and Punishment—U.S.A.*, 66  
*Crise du Logement, La (TV)*, 41  
*Croheim, Daniel*, 33  
*Cromwell, John*, 127  
*Cry Baby Killer*, 73
- Dassin, Jules*, 30  
*Day the World Ended, The*, 8  
*Déjeuner sur l'Herbe, Le*, 133  
*Delany, Maureen*, 61  
*Destiny of a Man*, 141  
*Diary of Anne Frank, The*, 78  
*Doctor's Dilemma, The*, 93  
*Dolce Vita, La*, 108  
*Doniol-Valcroze, Jacques*, 110  
*Dracula*, 6
- Eisenstein, S.M.*, 18, 74  
*End of St. Petersburg, The*, 156  
*Entertainer, The (play)*, 59  
*Evans, Dame Edith*, 33
- Face, The*, 67, 168  
*Fall, The*, 138  
*Fear Strikes Out*, 128  
*Félix, Louis*, 110  
*Fiend Without a Face, The*, 10  
*Fitzgerald, Barry*, 61  
*Flaud, Jacques*, 30  
*Flebus*, 82  
*Ford, John*, 150  
*Franju, Georges*, 115  
*Frank, Robert*, 118  
*Frankenheimer, John*, 129  
*Fudget's Budget*, 81
- Garbo, Greta*, 16  
*General della Rovere*, 143  
*Gigi*, 91  
*Ginsberg, Allen*, 118  
*Godard, Jean-Luc*, 110  
*God's Little Acre*, 71  
*Goha*, 112  
*Grande Illusion, La*, 19
- Hepburn, Katharine*, 149  
*Heston, Charlton*, 136  
*Hidden Fortress, The*, 137  
*Hiroshima mon Amour*, 113  
*Holden, William*, 150  
*Hole in the Head, A*, 152  
*Holt, Seth*, 61  
*Horse's Mouth, The*, 90  
*Hossein, Robert*, 110  
*Hunter, Tab*, 126  
*Hurricane*, 187
- I'm All Right, Jack*, 163  
*Immortal Land, The*, 39  
*Inn of the Sixth Happiness, The*, 38  
*Invasion of the Hell Creatures*, 8  
*Invention of Destruction, An*, 85  
*It Always Rains on Sunday*, 62  
*I Want to Live*, 68
- Joconde, La*, 80
- Killers, The*, 182  
*Kneale, Nigel*, 88  
*Kozintsev, Grigory*, 157  
*Kubrick, Stanley*, 135
- Lassally, Walter*, 66  
*Last Hurrah, The*, 4  
*Legend of Narayama, The*, 21  
*Little Foxes, The*, 178  
*Little Island, The*, 82  
*Look Back in Anger*, 31, 122, 125  
*Loren, Sophia*, 126  
*Lovers and Lollipops*, 120  
*Lumet, Sidney*, 126
- MacArthur, James*, 129  
*Mankiewicz, Joseph L.*, 149  
*March to Aldermaston*, 89  
*Mayniel, Juliette*, 115
- Merle, Le*, 83  
*Merry Widow, The*, 14  
*Middle of the Night*, 169  
*Midsummer Night's Dream, A*, 84  
*Moi, un Noir*, 117  
*Molinaro, Edouard*, 110  
*Molnar, Tibor*, 66  
*Mon Oncle*, 161, 162  
*Muhomatsu, the Rickshaw Man*, 23  
*Mulligan, Robert*, 130  
*Mysterious Satellite*, 8
- Nazarin*, 139  
*Night of the Hunter*, 99  
*North by Northwest*, 154  
*Nun's Story, The*, 170
- Olivier, Sir Laurence*, 135  
*Once upon a Time*, 83  
*Orfeu Negro*, 113  
*Orlowsky, Peter*, 118  
*Oro di Napoli*, 158  
*Ossessione*, 146  
*Our Man in Havana*, 134
- Paris nous Appartient*, 34  
*Party Crashers, The*, 68  
*Perkins, Anthony*, 130  
*Peter Ibbetson*, 20  
*Pollet, Jean-Daniel*, 110  
*Pork Chop Hill*, 155  
*Power Among Men*, 175
- Quatermass and the Pit (TV)*, 86  
*Quatre Cents Coups, Les*, 113
- Règle du Jeu, La*, 19  
*Reichenbach, Francois*, 110  
*Renoir, Jean*, 27, 29  
*Revenge of Frankenstein, The*, 10  
*Richardson, Tony*, 33, 88  
*Rio Bravo*, 153  
*Rivette, Jacques*, 33  
*Rogosin, Lionel*, 121  
*Romance*, 15  
*Room at the Top*, 5, 56, 57  
*Rossellini, Roberto*, 2, 27, 28  
*Rotha, Paul*, 61  
*Rozier, Jacques*, 110
- Salvage Gang, The*, 63  
*Savage Eye, The*, 142  
*Scandal in Sorrento*, 159  
*Scarlet Letter, The*, 17, 46  
*Schneider, Betty*, 33  
*Séchan, Edmond*, 110  
*Senso*, 147  
*Sequestrador, El*, 21  
*Seven Lively Arts (TV)*, 83  
*Si c'était vous (TV)*, 42  
*Signoret, Simone*, 61  
*Siodmak, Robert*, 180  
*Smith, Maggie*, 61  
*Solitaire, Un*, 82  
*Some Like it Hot*, 173  
*Son of Dracula*, 181  
*Stakeout on Dope Street*, 120  
*Stanley, Kim*, 127  
*State of the Union*, 152  
*Stiller, Mauritz*, 16  
*Sturges, Preston*, 185  
*Success Story (TV)*, 97  
*Suddenly, Last Summer*, 148  
*Sunday Romance, A*, 92
- Taylor, Elizabeth*, 149  
*Terra Trema, La*, 177  
*Tete contre les Murs, La*, 115  
*Tobacco Road*, 70  
*Tonight (TV)*, 96  
*Torrent, The*, 17  
*Towers, Constance*, 150  
*Train Without Timetable*, 140  
*Truffaut, Francois*, 110, 116  
*Twelve Angry Men*, 128
- Under Fire (TV)*, 95
- Yadim, Roger*, 110  
*Valère, Jean*, 110  
*Valli, Alida*, 144  
*Vas, Robert*, 66  
*Virgin Island*, 40  
*Visconti, Luchino*, 144  
*Vogel, Raymond*, 110
- Way Down East*, 46  
*Wayne, John*, 150  
*We are the Lambeth Boys*, 65, 164, 165  
*What Lola Wants*, 37  
*Why the Crow is Black*, 81  
*Wild Strawberries*, 35  
*Wind, The*, 14  
*Womanateer*, 9  
*World of Apu, The (former title: Apu in the World)*, 54
- You Can't Take It With You*, 152  
*Youth of Maxim, The*, 160  
*Zavattini, Cesare*, 157







seems to go right through him but actually curves closely round the body in a rubber arc. The "homme-cheval" pulls and the spear withdraws sickeningly, apparently through the body, disappearing with a final oozing flick through the torn shirt gashed with blood. Cocteau rises, chuckling maliciously. He has been lying there on the uncomfortable rocks for twenty minutes, in the dank atmosphere of the caves, but his first question as he comes over is, "You're not cold?" His solicitude for everyone is boundless.

Next day all is consternation. Minerva, who for some reason had been forced to spend several hours in a suffocating frog-mask of rubber, has had a heart-attack during the night. Cocteau is conscience-stricken. He disappears, but is back shortly with a drawing of her inscribed: "*A ma courageuse Minerve.*" The gift is conveyed, the actress emerges all smiles. Today, Cocteau is going to be borne to his tomb by two "hommes-chevaux" and surrounded by a crowd of *gitanos* who find it difficult not to look directly into the camera, thereby ruining several takes. Cocteau keeps up a constant patter, often malicious and barbed. "I talk all the time to keep the actors stimulated, or they go dead. Everyone is so good . . . *Oui, je viens, mon chéri.*" (Everyone is "*mon chéri*".) "Yes, Truffaut has advanced some money for the film," (there is even a Provençal *garagiste* who has offered his small stake). "Vadim is making an appearance; and Yul Brynner, Brigitte Bardot, Françoise Sagan . . . poor thing, she doesn't know what a novel is! My film is impossible to relate: a film can't be related any more than a picture. It is its matter and manner which count, not what is represented in it."

Few people have seen the scenario. I talk to one of the small-part actors who has played "un amoureux", sitting back to back with his beloved, and who is now playing an "homme-cheval." He seems unsure about how he fits into the film. "Did you say anything?"—"Yes, I had one line. I said: 'Tiresias makes you famous, but you still need to become known'." One recalls the famous aphorisms of *Coq et Harlequin*, many of which still seem profound. Scribbled in the margin of the script are certain key-statements: "The secret of poetry is to dissociate the things rendered familiar by habit and to place them in a light where we see them as if it were the first time a savage saw an aeroplane, a telephone, an electric light or a fork." And: "Imagine travelling from one planet to another, and that a knowledge of the secret of time and space allows one to move into the future and into the past—that's marvellous. But the nature of 'existence' and the structure of this matter we take for space . . . that's where the power of the mind ends." "That," Cocteau says, "is the motive of the first sequence of my film: what you might call the plot of a vaudeville piece with space and time as its theme instead of adultery!"

"The poet, led astray in his journey through time, tries to link up with a sage who is the only one that can re-integrate him with his own epoch. But each time he hits a period when the sage is either no longer there, or hasn't yet become what he will become, or is too old to communicate his knowledge. Finally the poet guesses right and, once more in his own time, sets forth on the hazardous road of life with all its difficulties for the free agent." The theme of the poet's trials closes the circle with Cocteau's first film, *Le Sang d'un Poète*.

Filming has continued all day, with Cocteau himself appearing in every scene. Now he is required to fall backwards on to his tomb from the top of three steps leading to it. For this scene he is wearing false painted eyes, and the effect of standing there sightless must be a strong feeling of vertigo. Everyone feels for the frail, elderly man standing there under the fierce lights. Finally they are ready. His hand clutches his heart and he falls. "No! I bent my knees." They prepare the shot again; obviously it is quite an endurance test. Half-way through, watching the cameraman, I can see that something has gone wrong: the film has jammed. "Was that good?" Cocteau calls. The cameraman makes a vaguely reassuring murmur. "Don't lie to me," comes the voice. "How long will

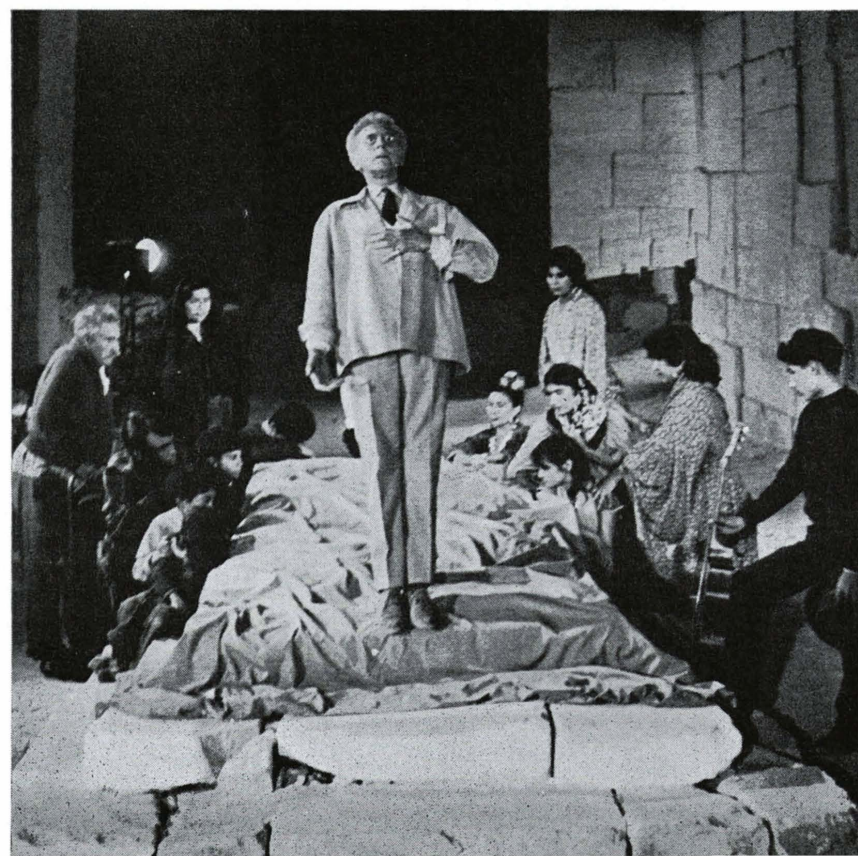


Les Baux: Derek Prouse talks to Jean Cocteau.

it take?" It will take ten minutes. He stands there patiently, and finally the scene is completed, the false eyes are removed. Cocteau's own eyes are streaming, but he is still blithe. In a few moments he will finish the scene lying there on the tomb, a cloud of smoke (from a cigarette handed him by a technician just before the take) curling from his lips, which wear a slight, enigmatic smile. Death has not triumphed.

The filming ends, but after dinner Cocteau cannot wait to get to the little circus performing in the valley. Under the canvas a few villagers sit on the hard benches, but Cocteau has eyes only for the acrobats. "*Quelle grâce! Quelle simplicité!* You would not find that in Paris today. I must try to get some of their quality into my film."

Outside, the fantastic rocks, carved by the wind into grotesque faces, loom in the moonlight. "*Quel site!* You know it was here that Dante conceived his *Inferno*? I am coming to London in November to decorate the little church in Leicester Square. Ring me at Claridge's." Hair flying, cape flung round his shoulders, the neat, elegant figure climbs the hill to his hotel, gesturing his plans for tomorrow.





# In the Picture

## L'Affaire Vadim

**LOUIS MARCORELLES** writes: The young French cinema is still La big conversational topic in France, and the so-called (new) wave of immorality breaking over our screens is currently under fire from all directions. A writer as eminent as François Mauriac announces in the influential left-wing weekly *L'Express*: "My very soul revolts against this world of the Chabrols and the Vadims," the reference being to Chabrol's *Les Cousins* and *A Double Tour* and to Vadim's version of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. M. Mauriac's point of view does not seem quite so unassailable when one remembers his own novels, with their more than daring portrait of the ways of bourgeois society. But images on the screen seem more shocking than words; and with Vadim the affair has achieved homeric proportions.

Anyone familiar with French literature must know of the licentious novel by Choderlos de Laclos, *Captain of Artillery*, first published in the spring of 1782 and praised by Stendhal, Nerval, Baudelaire and Taine as a masterpiece. The twentieth century has ratified this judgment. Adopting the formula of the novel written in letters, which Rousseau had just employed in his *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Laclos presented a pitiless analysis of an effete and corrupt society, in which the glorification of



vice was helping to undermine an already shaky social order. Icily perfect and relentlessly lucid, the book will always survive as the supreme example of the French analytical faculty. There were certainly grounds for fearing what might happen during its translation to the screen. But Roger Vailland, winner of the Prix Goncourt for his novel *La Loi*, and an expert on Laclos, to whom he had devoted several studies and whose brand of consciously immoral dandyism obviously appealed to him, was signed to write the script with Vadim. There could hardly have been a firmer guarantee of intellectual respectability.

The film resulting from this collaboration transfers the action to 1959, and from Laclos' dissolute aristocracy to the Parisian upper middle class. Writer and director both vigorously defend the legitimacy of this transposition. But if it isn't apparent that the story would have worked better in its original setting, it is made so by the abrupt shift from the novel's cool detachment to the film's short-winded psychology. We are finally left with the picture of a snobbish little world which the duffle-coated intellectuals of Chelsea would happily recognise, and whose greatest defect is its lack of style. Roger Vailland tries to sustain the change of tone through dialogue which sometimes borrows directly from Laclos, sometimes amounts to an almost too clever pastiche. Roger Vadim, for his part, continues on his own terms to develop his picture of our "decadent" Western society. Pushing even further his experiments in what one is tempted to call skin-deep honesty, he shows us his hero (Gérard Philipe) "educating" first a rather stupid girl, then a pretty and prudish *bourgeoise* (Annette Vadim). Devotedly, Vadim's camera surveys Mme. Vadim's body. In a sense, his film seems an extreme example of the fashionable contemporary exhibitionism.

Our censors were roused to challenge the film on two counts: both for what it showed, and for the possible social and moral consequences of the spectacle. With the blatant sexuality so apparent in his celebrated *Et Dieu créa la Femme*, Vadim poses as the truthful witness of a displaced *bourgeoisie* pursuing its own nothingness through fantasies of the flesh. A not entirely unjustified parallel can be drawn between Vadim and Ingmar Bergman, or even Wajda. One finds in all their films the same desire to tell us everything about the condition of twentieth century man; and the same rejection of classical disciplines, the same uncontrolled subjectivity. Vadim demands study not only as an artist but as a contemporary object lesson.

Holding that public order was threatened, the authorities went into action on the evening of the film's première, at the Colisée cinema. An invited audience—René Clair, Audrey Hepburn, Mel Ferrer, etc.—was kept waiting vainly outside the cinema, while the most extraordinary group of censors ever assembled hastily viewed the disputed object. Among the censors: M. Frey, Minister of Information, who finally gave the film its certificate, M. Soustelle, Minister for the Sahara, M. Michelet, Minister of Justice, and M. Couve de Murville, the Foreign Minister, who was credited with the ironic comment that the film after all would show nothing to justify all the commotion.

All the same, a section of the Press attacked it vigorously, notably the Gaullist weekly *Carrefour*, which defended its viewpoint in tones reminiscent of the promoters of Moral Order during the Vichy régime. Stung to the quick, Vadim declared that he was prepared to leave France; and in fact he has just signed a long-term contract with Carlo Ponti and Paramount. Shown publicly, the film at once broke all box-office records. In the provinces, however, it encountered further hazards: conservative Tours and Rouen banned it; the more liberal Lille and Marseilles let it be shown. To save face among the moralists, the film's export was forbidden;

"*Les Liaisons Dangereuses*": Roger Vadim rehearsing a scene with Jeanne Moreau.

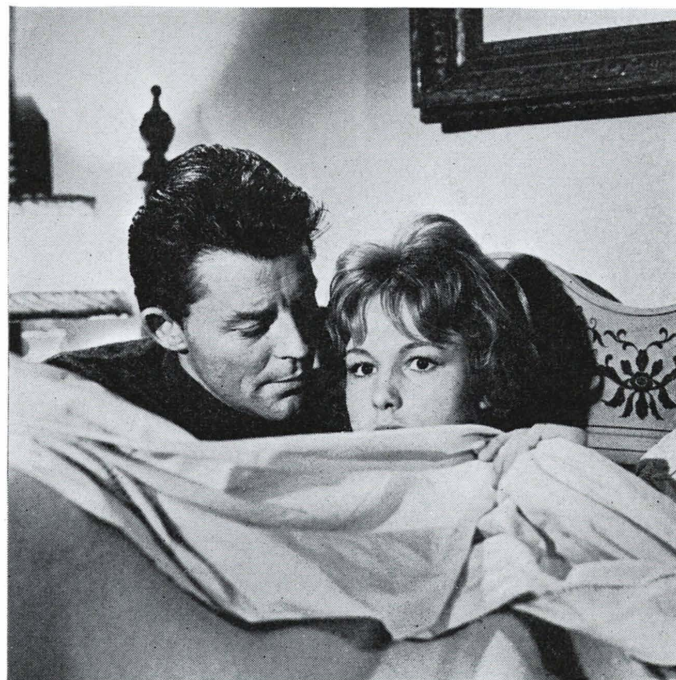
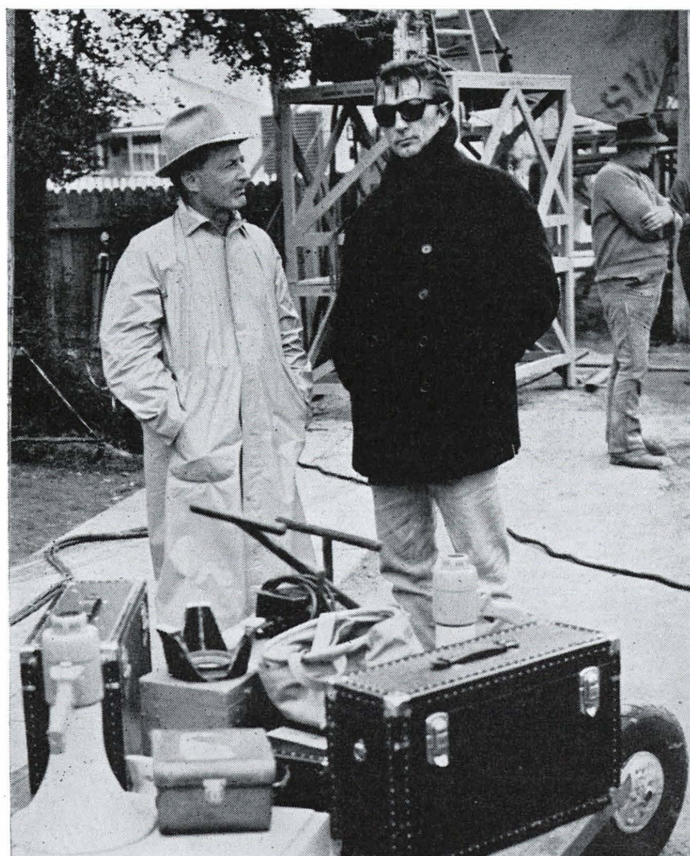


which brought the Belgians hurrying to Lille, the English to Paris. Simultaneously, the age limit for X-type films was raised from sixteen to eighteen, and there is talk of raising it again to twenty. Finally, yet another enemy had to be faced: an organisation called the Society of Men of Letters, charged with preserving France's literary heritage. By judicial order the film emerged with a new title: *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* 1960. The element of buffoonery in the whole affair seemed at last to have reached its height; and my own feeling is that these so-called "daring" films (*Les Liaisons*, Malle's *Les Amants*) have in fact their slightly infantile elements.

Parallel to all this, a knowingly timed attack on the *nouvelle vague* has been launched in the dailies and weeklies from IDHEC (the well-known school of cinema, somewhat scorned by the young directors). It seems pretty rough justice that directors like Truffaut, Resnais or Chabrol should be judged incapable of knowing what to do with a camera by critics such as Marcel L'Herbier, the one-time *avant-garde* talent of the 'twenties, and Michel Audiard, the scriptwriter of *Les Grandes Familles*, etc. Meanwhile, Jacques Becker and Jean Renoir have come unequivocally to the defence of their younger colleagues, Becker admirably pointing out that it is only through making films that one becomes a cineaste.

Far from all these controversies, but not from publicity, Jean Cocteau has decided to bring out his *Testament d'Orphée* in complete independence of the big commercial circuits, and by-passing the distributors. Two art houses, one on the right bank, one on the left, will screen the film for an indefinite run. In normal distribution, we have just seen Renoir's *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*, which has had a mixed reception. The work of a poet and a man who loves nature, it too defies both technical and industrial conventions. With all this, the year which has just ended has been the most decisive experienced by the French cinema in several decades.

Fred Zinnemann and Robert Mitchum on the set of "The Sundowners", an Australian pioneering story in which Mitchum stars with Deborah Kerr and Peter Ustinov.



"Les Liaisons Dangereuses": Gérard Philipe and Annette Stroyberg, the 1959 Valmont and victim.

## Working with Ford

JOHN GILLET writes: Martin Rackin, the young Hollywood writer, whom I met when he was in London last autumn, seemed confident that the independent producer was destined to play an ever increasing part in the pattern of American production. Having worked with a variable collection of producers and directors during a writing career which comprises over forty scripts, from *Fighting Father Dunne* to *Long John Silver*, Alan Ladd thrillers and Martin and Lewis comedies, he was able to give some forthright opinions on the directorial talent available today. He was clearly impressed by Robert Wise and Mark Robson, among others—"they're cutters, you know; they can feel how to put a film together"—but seemed less confident about some of the young graduates from television. Recently Mr. Rackin has himself combined production with writing. His most considerable achievement in this capacity is *The Horse Soldiers*, made with his partner John Lee Mahin; and his collaboration with Ford on this picture had clearly left a deep impression.

Like many contemporaries of his generation, Ford now never looks at rushes. "He knows what he's shot," Mr. Rackin commented. "One day I went to his room to ask about the day's shooting and found a note pinned to the door: 'I'm sleepy. I know the film is good. See you tomorrow.' You've got to expect anything when you're working with him. One day we were returning from a location when he suddenly stopped the car and ordered everyone—horses, equipment, extras—to be brought to the spot at once. When everyone was assembled, he turned to me and said: 'Look over that way. There's the background for your main titles.' And it was: we just shot the horsemen passing over the horizon and that's the beginning of the film."

Mr. Rackin confirmed the many stories of Ford's dictatorial attitude towards producers. "If I asked him something during shooting, he would snap 'Are you talking to me as producer or writer?' I would hastily reply 'writer, of course' and the conversation would continue. But he would never allow a producer on the set—even Goldwyn got the cold shoulder. As writer, I was occasionally called on to provide a new scene at a moment's notice. 'That won't work,' Ford would say, pointing to the script. 'Go and sit under that tree and do something better with it...' He used to run the unit like a military operation. Everyone had to be on hand even when not directly needed. Once, everyone went out with their mackintoshes ready; Ford would shoot in the rain if he felt the scene would work like that."

Anyone who has seen *The Horse Soldiers* will remember the sharp directness with which the Newton Station battle is shot. Mr. Rackin disclosed that the whole sequence was completed in one day, thanks





"The Story on Page One": Rita Hayworth, Clifford Odets and Anthony Franciosa at a script conference. The film is the first directed by Odets since "None but the Lonely Heart" in 1944.

to Ford's confidence and the precise placing of the two cameras. "How many directors could beat that?" Despite all the elements of improvisation and flashes of sudden inspiration, Ford apparently gave the impression of having made the entire film in his mind, even when shooting had scarcely begun. "One day I caught him reading a script which wasn't ours. Showing surprise, I was greeted with a curt 'Don't worry. I've already finished with your film.'"

Perhaps the nicest example of this sheer professional know-how was Mr. Rackin's story of Ford's request for precisely 100 feet of dolly track for the locations. "When we were loading the truck Ford suddenly exclaimed, 'You've got 125 feet up there; take 25 feet off and we can take a couple more lights.' I was surprised by this mysteriously accurate calculation, but we did as he said. And, do you know what! The longest dolly track in the whole film is 93 feet..."

### Gran Premio Bergamo

ROBERT VAS writes: Imagine a hollowed Italian church, San Agostino, almost 600 years old, with heads of painted saints peeping out unexpectedly from behind a crumbling coat of plaster (the building was damaged by fire in the Middle Ages and later used as a stable); now a CinemaScope screen is spread before the altar—certainly an impressive and fitting setting in which to show films on art. *Gran Premio Bergamo*, organised last year for the second time and warmly supported by the inhabitants of this pleasant and civilised little town, is mainly concerned with art films and has already become a meeting-place for this rather specialised brand of film and film-maker.

The most interesting aspect of this festival is watching just how this kind of film-making, usually classed as simply educational, tries and sometimes manages to find its own expressive language. The crude, mystical statues in Enrico Fulchignoni's *Prehistoric Art of Mexico* gain a kind of renewed power through lighting, simple but well-chosen angles, editing, and the way static objects are manipulated before the camera to disclose their peculiar plasticity. In a more sophisticated manner, Basil Wright and Michael Ayrton succeed in creating a specific world with *Greek Sculpture*—a "supplement" to *Immortal Land*, and a more successful film. John Read's *The Artist Speaks* is interesting for the direct methods it employs to illustrate the creative process, though the subjects themselves—the abstract sculpture of Reg Butler and Kenneth Armitage—are not brought closer to the audience. And so on: Edouard Berne's *Sont mort les batisseurs* contrasts the placidity of a medieval church with the vigorous construction work on a nearby dam; the Danish *The Gripping Beast* uses a freakish cartoon tech-

nique for scientific instruction; a witty commentary, spoken by a sensually gratified male voice, creates its own apt mood for Jean Vidal's film about *The Sun King*.

But these are just techniques, taken partly from their context, and techniques which tend monotonously to repeat themselves. The animation of static illustrations by editing, for instance, turns up in almost every other film, reminding one just how limited are the methods the art film director has at his disposal. It is less a question of lack of imagination, though, than of the absence of a personal approach. The film-maker too often remains an onlooker: shots of statues or paintings succeed each other like the pages of an album—and, indeed, it would often be more enjoyable to study them from an album. The mood comes out of a can—Vivaldi on the harpsichord to go with shots of antique churches soaring against the blue Italian sky. What one misses is the sense of a personal world that Haanstra gave us, for instance, in his *Rembrandt*, and that can lift a "collector's piece" into a striking human experience. Perhaps this is why Robert Snyder's *A Visit to Pablo Casals* made such a strong impact: it has real mood, it portrays a character with a direct, almost newsreel quality; and its approach is not that of a film on art but of the genuine art film. A rare thing.

### A Visit to Prague

JOHN GILLET writes: Our knowledge of Czech cinema has long been restricted almost entirely to puppet and cartoon films. During a short visit to Czechoslovak State Film last November, I managed to see a fairly representative number of live films by directors whose names, outside the occasional Festival performance, are barely known in the West. At its vast studio at Barrandov, employing directors more active than those of any other East European state, this well-organised industry produces at least thirty features a year as well as hundreds of documentaries, specialised and animated films. As in Hungary and Poland, the end of the Stalinist period meant a widening of creative activity and the emergence of many new film-makers, though pre-war veterans like Fric and Vavra seem to have lost something of their old flair.

By and large, the production situation at the end of the year was promising. Jiri Weiss had completed *Romeo, Juliet and Darkness*, a wartime love story about a Jewish girl hunted by the Germans. Zeman (director of *An Invention of Destruction*) was planning a version of *Münchhausen* in a similar style, and Alfred Radok the second edition of *Lanterna Magica*, which mixes both film and live theatrical action. Audiences for Czech films seemed plentiful, discussion on them animated. Talking with a group of film-makers and critics at the well-equipped Film Club, I remarked on the apparent increase in Western-style technical mannerisms and narrative clichés, an impression formed after seeing some thirty features in a week, including several on young delinquents. A director suggested that "this is what happens when you give rich food to somebody nearing the end of a period of diet." And certainly, since Czech directors' experience of the West seems restricted to a few prominent but rather limited talents, their cinema does appear to have turned itself, like some other Iron Curtain film industries, into an artistic distorting mirror. The most urgent problem in Prague, though, appears to be a shortage of really good writers, which has led to a lot of loosely constructed films cluttered with extraneous elements. Technically, the films are solidly professional, with atmospheric camerawork and production design. There is also a reassuring element of social criticism in the works of some of the young directors, but without that introspection and bitterness one associates with the Polish school.

The Czech season at the National Film Theatre in February will reflect all these tendencies. Apart from feature-length animated films by established artists like Trnka and Hofman, it will include several modern stories (Klos' and Kadar's *The House at the Terminus*, Hubáček's *An Uneasy Romance*), carefully cast and with a vibrant performance in the latter by Dana Medrická, a stage actress. *The Puppies*, made mainly on location in Prague by Ivo Novák, is a lively picture of Czech youth, similar in vein to Máriássy's *A Glass of Beer*; more sober in tone, Jasny's *September Nights*, and Helge's *School for Fathers* attack bureaucracy and self-interest in an almost documentary style, though with rounded and satiric characterisation. Two titles stand out among the many shorts to be shown: *Fame*, Bretislav Pojar's fast and furious debunking of modern art poseurs, and *Attention!*, Jiri Brdecka's explosive ten-minute comment on war.

The Czech cinema today has many responsible and sympathetic artists who are striving to find their own style. At this crucial stage in their development, they are in urgent need of our encouragement and comment.



## Film Lectureship

SIR WILLIAM COLDSTREAM, Slade Professor of Fine Art, writes: The importance of the film both as an art form and as one of the world's most powerful means of communication gives it the clearest claim to the attention of universities; where, moreover, it can often be highly relevant in the study of long established subjects such as Fine Art, Psychology, Economics and Education. While the film has for some time been considered an appropriate subject for study in universities in America, France and Germany, it has up to the present found no place in a university in this country. Now, however, the subject is to be introduced in the University of London. Through the good offices of the British Film Institute, grants have been made to University College, London, by the British Film Producers Association, the J. Arthur Rank Group Charity and the Associated British Picture Corporation to support the study of and research in the film. It is felt that University College, with its many departments ranging through the Arts and Sciences, will provide a peculiarly favourable setting for the introduction of this study.

The scheme proposed involves the appointment of a Lecturer who will be attached to the Slade School and will have facilities for showing films, lecturing, research and the supervision of postgraduate students. While no undergraduates will be registered for the subject, the scheme provides funds for the establishment of two postgraduate studentships. It is hoped to attract to these studentships graduates who wish to undertake research on some aspect of the film. Apart from postgraduate work, it is proposed to conduct courses of lectures and seminars on the film for the benefit of all members of the University who may be interested. Some of these courses will be given by the Lecturer himself and he will also have at his disposal funds to allow him to invite experts from outside to assist in the work.

The appointment of the Lecturer will be from the beginning of the Session 1960-61, when the scheme will come into operation, and it is hoped to announce the terms of application for the Postgraduate Studentship in the spring of 1960. It is proposed to limit the duration of the scheme to a trial period of five years, at the end of which time it will be reviewed.

## Vancouver Festival

STANLEY FOX writes: The Vancouver Film Festival made a determined effort this time to erase any feelings of inferiority left over from 1958's rather cool reception by the international press. Although many of the 28 features screened between August 3rd and 15th had been previously shown in Europe, there was enough fresh material to justify Vancouver's place among the seemingly endless number of new festivals. The opening night was packed and fairly safe, *The Rickshaw Man* and *The Little Island* being preceded by the beautifully cut U.N. compilation film, *Overture*. During the next twelve days, the more memorable events were the first showing of *Weddings and Babies*, which, although it had the advantage of an appearance by Viveca Lindfors and was generally liked, did not go over as well with a North American audience as it had in Venice; the premiere of Rogosin's *Come Back Africa*; Denis and Terry Sanders' *Crime and Punishment, U.S.A.*; the North American debut of *Tiger Bay* and *The Scapegoat*, the former considered an unsung masterpiece and the latter rather pooh-poohed. The East European renaissance made a great impact. *House under the Rocks*, *The Wolf Trap*, *The Iron Flower*, *Creation of the World* and *Eva Wants to Sleep* all gave the local critics plenty of material for speculation on leadership in film-making.

A high proportion of the shorts were experimental, and as might be expected, the Poles swept the field with the same films that had caused a stir in Brussels. The U.S. entered two excellent productions from the University of California, *A Light for John* and *Have I Told You Lately That I Love You?* The first is a compelling story of a young man's inability to make a place for himself in society due to his low mentality. The second is a frightening look at man's ultimate surrender to the machine in his family and business life.

The Festival judges were the writer George Tabori, Osmond Borrodaile, the veteran director of photography on most of the Korda classics, and James Card, curator of Motion Pictures at George Eastman House, Rochester. They judged only non-features, since Vancouver operates under the same regulations as Edinburgh and all features were "invited". Mr. Card's presence accounted for the screening of four recently restored silents from the Eastman archives—Tourneur's *Last of the Mohicans* (1922), Lang's *Kriemhild's Revenge*, *It with Clara Bow*, and the complete version of Pabst's *Pandora's Box* with the incomparable Louise Brooks.

Final major awards: Documentary, Denis Mitchell's *A Soho*



A scene from Andrzej Wajda's "Lotna", a story of a Polish cavalry regiment during the first months of the War.

Story; Children's Films, Wagasugi's *The Story of Small and Big Kids*; Experimental Plaque, *Two Men and a Wardrobe*. Although still lacking celebrities and an adequate press, the Vancouver Festival with its 81 shorts and 28 features is the largest in North America and, if it maintains its present standards, may well become the Edinburgh of the New World.

## Work in Progress

### Great Britain

STANLEY DONEN: *Surprise Package*, comedy about a deported gangster and a girl, from a novel by Art Buchwald. With Yul Brynner and Mitzi Gaynor. Donen Productions, for Columbia.

CHARLES FRENCH: *Cone of Silence*, the third production on Bryanston's schedule. Based on a novel by David Beatty about civil aviation pilots, and featuring Michael Craig, George Sanders, Bernard Lee.

MICHAEL POWELL: *Peeping Tom*, described by the director as a "psychological horror film," about a psychiatrist's son turned sex murderer. With Carl Boehm, Moira Shearer, Maxine Audley; script by Leo Marks. For Anglo Amalgamated.

### United States

ALFRED HITCHCOCK: *Psycho*, with Anthony Perkins and Janet Leigh. Melodrama about a troubled young motel-owner who keeps his homicidal maniac mother in a locked room, with elaborate twist ending. Hitchcock Productions, for Paramount.

ELIA KAZAN: his first film for more than two years is *Wild River*, a sociologically-slanted study of a big dam-building enterprise, adapted from two American novels. With Montgomery Clift, Lee Remick and Jo Van Fleet. For Fox.

STANLEY KRAMER: *Inherit the Wind*, from a play about the famous Tennessee "monkey trial" in which Clarence Darrow defended a schoolmaster's right to teach the theory of evolution. With Spencer Tracy and Fredric March as opposing lawyers; also Gene Kelly and Florence Eldridge. Kramer Productions for United Artists.

### Franco-Italian Co-Productions

REV. FATHER J. J. BRUCKBERGER and PHILIPPE AGOSTINI: based on a scenario by Georges Bernanos, this first film of Bresson's co-writer (*Les Anges du Péché*) and the celebrated French cameraman is *Le Dialogue des Carmélites*. In Dyaliscope, with an interesting cast including Jeanne Moreau, Alida Valli, Madeleine Renaud, Jean-Louis Barrault, Pierre Brasseur and Claude Laydu.

ABEL GANCE: *Austerlitz*, the return to a characteristic theme and magnitude. Location shooting in Yugoslavia by Henri Alekan from Gance's own screenplay, with an enormous all-star cast: Rossano Brazzi, Martine Carol, Ivan Desny, Jean Marais, Georges Marchal, Jack Palance, Lilli Palmer, Elvire Popesco, Vittorio de Sica, Michel Simon and Orson Welles.





# THEATRE

THE ENTERTAINER



LEFT: Three off-set studies. Anna Magnani and Martin Jurow, producer of *The Fugitive Kind*; Marlon Brando, Joanne Woodward, Anna Magnani, Sidney Lumet and cameraman Boris Kaufman; Sir Laurence Olivier, Joan Plowright and director Tony Richardson. TOP LEFT: Val Xavier (Marlon Brando) throws back at Lady Torrance (Anna Magnani) the money she has accused him of stealing from her cashbox. ABOVE: Joan Plowright and Laurence Olivier rehearsing one of the music hall scenes from *The Entertainer*. RIGHT: The funeral scene, with Alan Bates, Brenda de Banzie and Olivier.







## THE FUGITIVE KIND

Two screen adaptations from the stage, both coincidentally of plays which had their first British presentation at the Royal Court. *The Fugitive Kind* (Tennessee Williams' *Orpheus Descending* under a new title) is Sidney Lumet's fourth feature, filmed in New York with a formidable cast.

*The Entertainer*, filmed at Shepperton, Morecambe and elsewhere on location, is the second film Tony Richardson has directed from a John Osborne play. The cast—Sir Laurence Olivier, Joan Plowright, Brenda de Banzie, Shirley Ann Field—comes mainly from the stage production.

## FILMED





# YOUTH and the CINEMA



## (1) The teenage rave

by PETER JOHN DYER

The changing times. *Top*: Authority triumphant in W. S. Van Dyke's *The Devil is a Sissy* (1936), with Jackie Cooper, Mickey Rooney and Freddie Bartholomew. *Second from top*: Teenagers triumphant in *The Young Stranger* (1956), with James MacArthur (centre).



Bedroom confidences. *Above right*: Deanna Durbin, Nan Grey and Barbara Read in Henry Koster's *Three Smart Girls* (1936). *Right*: Mamie Van Doren watches Jan Sterling comfort co-ed student Diane Jergens after she has been beaten by a gang of high school dope fiends. A scene from the Alfred Zugsmith production *High School Confidential!*, directed by Jack Arnold in 1958.





An immense amount has been spoken and written during the past few months about the "teenage problem," including the arguable proposition that there is no problem. The cinema's approach to the teenager—the way it sets about reaching him, the image it presents of him—is an integral part of the whole portrait of today's youth. This is the first of two articles investigating some of the major issues involved in the cinema's ever-increasing awareness of what has come to be regarded as a teenage sub-culture. Following them, we intend to invite a sociologist's comment on the reverse side of the picture.

HIS CLOTHES ARE COMFORTABLE and sexually explicit. His manners, except to barmen, seem abominable. He is only secure, communicative, really himself, in his hang-out at the back of a candy store. His father is an ineffectual, out-of-touch shadow, a bantering voice behind a newspaper or a cocktail-shaker. His mother is foolish, puzzled but indulgent. He has a battered car, a hi-fi and a buddy. He is furiously loyal, and often demonstrates his affection with a right to the jaw. He hates cops and cinema managers. He knows and tacitly accepts prostitutes, homosexuals, drug addicts and petty crooks. Sketched in from dozens of random descriptions, feature by feature like a wanted man's poster, he is today's teenager; and for the first time in cinema history Hollywood has gone down on its knees to him.

Hollywood's preoccupation with youth is nothing new. Ever since D. W. Griffith recruited his first nymphet, there have been teen-aged stars: the Vitagraph Girl, the polo-playing college boy and the Joan Crawford flapper, the Wampus Baby Stars of 1929, Andy Hardy, Donald O'Connor and Peggy Ryan, the Babes in Arms and on Broadway. None of these, however, brought about a determined policy of tailoring films for teenagers. None could claim, like James Dean in the 'fifties, to be speaking for and in the idiom of its own generation. Even those, the flapper in the 'twenties and early 'thirties, the Dead End Kids a little later, who came nearest to authentic self-expression, were in fact expressions of the peevish adult disapproval of the Jazz Age (*Has the World Gone Mad?*, *Are These Our Children?*), or the breast-beating self-recrimination of the Depression years (*Angels with Dirty Faces*). Their world was an adult world, their place in it strictly defined; their idol, and the audience's idol, was not one of their kind, but the disillusioned older woman, the gangster and the fighting priest.

Young people have always been impressionable, imitative. Their rites, language, habits and opinions change with each decade as their models and heroes change. In the 'thirties, these models were restricted to parents, teachers, friends, relatives, the traditional heroes of adventure books, and such film-stars as held some kind of appeal, some opportunity for self-identification. With the possible exception of the Dead End Kids, their own generation of screen personalities meant little to them. Freddy, Jackie, Judy, Mickey—even their names gave the game away, tailing off into those ignominious diminutives which are the hallmark of the child star. And that is exactly what they were: parental fantasy-children, dreamed up by adults to please adults. There were child stars and there were adult stars; there was as yet no real sense that the teenager might demand something separate from both.

Many of the adult stars, in fact, pleased the children. The middle 'thirties in particular were rich in action

heroes: sports champions, explorers, aviators, pioneers, typified by Tyrone Power and Richard Greene. So that, as the decade drew to a close, international tensions increased, and film heroism narrowed down to a glamorous, militantly patriotic fervour, the young American found himself once more in an adult's world, a world of pre-recruiting sales talk.

He came home from the war to an atmosphere of change and uncertainty, to seemingly new, and darker, tensions: alcoholism (*The Lost Weekend*), misogyny (Joan Crawford had returned in mink and gun), racialism (*Crossfire*) and violence (*Brute Force*). On the other hand, the honest recognition of these tensions was bringing back to the cinema some of the healthy realism surrendered in the 'thirties to a minority censorship. And if gangsters like Cagney and Widmark were now patently psychotic, this, too, seemed realistic. In any case an army of psychiatrists, headed by Lee J. Cobb, and priests, headed by Bing Crosby, had arrived on the scene, endowed by Hollywood with godlike properties and confidence in a cure.

But there was no cure, just as there can be no end to a modern war. And in at least one respect the most tragic consequences of World War II were just beginning.

When family life breaks down, due to migration, economic and emotional pressure, war, or any other stress, a pattern of adolescent gang-activity followed by delinquency seems to appear. Ever since the Depression set whole families adrift on the highways to California, millions more each year have migrated from south to north, east to west and mid-west to east. The war sent hundreds of thousands from the border states into the factories of Detroit and the aircraft plants and shipyards of Southern California. Young men in unprecedented numbers were uprooted, mobilised and dispersed throughout the world. Nor did peacetime stem this mass migration. If anything it was intensified, away from the impoverished areas into Los Angeles, Detroit and New York. And all the while Negroes and Puerto Ricans, Italians and Mexicans, continued to pour into the cities' deep slums, swelling the ranks of the local gangs, each with its tradition of violence.

Transiency, poverty, mass communications and the dissemination of gang *mores*, the distorted reflection in adolescent activity of the atmosphere of the adult world itself—these are just some of the main social factors which led to the inevitable emergence of the teenager as a staple Hollywood character in 1949. His role, at first, was simple: to portray, as far as possible truthfully and with sympathy, the immediate problems of his generation. And this for a while he did. But when a host of often spurious "adult" films began to play their part—an admittedly indeterminate part—in establishing stereotypes of adolescent behaviour, a chain-reaction was set up between film, film-teenager and real-life teenager. As a result, almost every symptom of post-war adult tension, from drug-addiction to murder, was reflected eventually in teenage films.

To begin with, however, the screen-teenager was as much a product of the situation inside Hollywood as a social phenomenon. Box-office returns were falling, television looked like becoming the exhibitor's nightmare, and the day of long-established name "draws"—most of them now in their forties and fifties—was past. A new audience had to be considered, those who were children during





The rock'n'roller: Tommy Sands in "Sing, Boy, Sing".

the war, others not even born: millions of potential filmgoers, with their own interests, problems and needs. Quite obviously they would not be satisfied with the child-stars and films which pleased their parents in the 'thirties. Yet if the cinema was to survive, it was essential that they should be won over, given entertainment tailored to their own evaluation of themselves.

## 2

Independence, small-scale experiment, the influence of Italian neo-realism, individuality and youth: these were the key-notes of 1949. Tony Curtis in *City Across the River*, Sally Forrest and Keefe Brasselle in *Not Wanted*, Audie Murphy in *Bad Boy*, Farley Granger and Cathy O'Donnell in Nicholas Ray's *They Live by Night*, John Derek in the same director's *Knock on Any Door*: these were among the new faces. The themes of adolescent unrest were clearly signalled by the titles. Vigorous, uneven in merit, the films were an important adjunct to—in Ray's case actually part of—a promising movement of much wider scope (*Act of Violence*, *The Set-Up*, etc.) and constructive, contemporary regard.

Yet within a year the movement as such was almost dead. Hit by McCarthyism, Hollywood lost its nerve, retreated for a time from themes of social awareness, and indulged itself hugely in technical experiment. Meanwhile the new faces—Brando, John Ericson, Dewey Martin, Don Murray—still continued to crowd rapidly one upon another, creating a composite portrait of American youth that reflected less the tensions of life itself than those of America's film-makers.

Hollywood's approach to the teenager subject during this period began with the psychological thriller, passed through a stage of passionate self-identification, and ended in caricature. *Gun Crazy*, the story of two young lovers who take to armed

robbery, started a cycle of frankly suspenseful entertainments making rash sorties into psycho-analytical territory, of which the two best were set in American universities. *A Kiss Before Dying* cast Robert Wagner as a spoilt and emotionally sterile student who seduces and murders a wealthy industrialist's daughter (Joanne Woodward), then ruthlessly pursues her sister in an attempt to acquire money and position. *Five Against the House* told of a group of bored students whose plan to rob a gambling casino as a joke misfires when the oldest (Brian Keith) is suddenly revealed as a psychopath.

The acceptance or otherwise of the thesis underlying these films, that revolt against a too-rigidly circumscribed environment can lead to criminal get-rich schemes and a degree of mental disturbance, was a relatively small matter. They were unpretentious thrillers and they worked on those terms. With *The Wild One* and *End as a Man*, where the approach was ostensibly realistic and the documentation valid, the thesis became all-important: that, given certain circumstances, American adolescents who voluntarily enlist in uniformed gangs or cliques begin by searching for that authority and stability lacking in their own environment, and end by violently imposing their own authority on society—in other words in fascism. But after illustrating their thesis with considerable power and conviction, both films lapsed into romanticism and contrivance. Brando's "My old man could hit harder than that"; Mary Murphy's "He never learned how to say thank you": when a film exaggerates an isolated news-story to the symbolic level of *The Wild One*, sentimental dialogue like this—presumably intended to relate its hero to the complex psychological drives of contemporary society—can only serve to highlight violence. It certainly won't explain it.

The wildly improbable melodrama of *The Blackboard Jungle*, the caricatured playing of certain parts in *End as a Man*: such facile over-emphasis soon became commonplace. Both in serious films like *A Face in the Crowd*, and in comedies (*A King in New York*, several Jayne Mansfield and Jerry Lewis vehicles), teenagers were parodied with a savagery that bordered on hysteria. And behind that violence could be sensed an atmosphere of resigned conformity or blind hatred; or perhaps a sort of compensation complex, whereby the directors' over-emotional affirmation of distorted values might somehow be absolved by viciously satirising the contortions of a Lonesome Rhodes fan-club.

Given certain circumstances . . . This had become the automatic premise behind a whole cycle of films romanticising news-stories about the tiny fraction of 1% of the total adolescent population which constitutes American juvenile delinquency. Nobody made a seriously corrective film about the lives of the other 99%; or about the street club workers or



The parent problem: Troy Donahue and Dorothy McGuire in "A Summer Place".



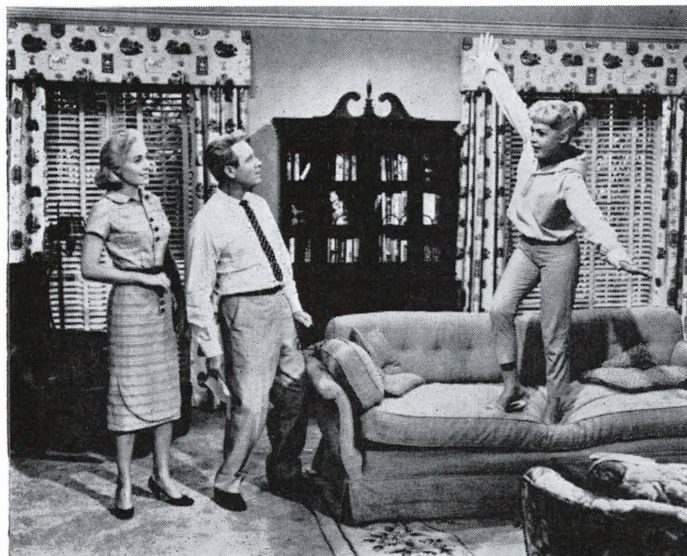
the Police Juvenile Aid Bureau or schools with a positive approach. Admittedly the news-story adaptations devoted to this fractional aspect of American youth were always authentic. It was the final impression that was so misleading: the implication that no day in an American school is complete without a beating, a rape, a theft or a murder; that all military academies are hothouses of perversion; that motorcyclists are thinly disguised storm-troopers. When defeat is in the air, the line between "It can't happen here" and "Let's hope it happens here" tends to disappear altogether.

3

This was the atmosphere in which the James Dean myth was born. A promising career cut short at 24; a powerfully obsessed film, *Rebel without a Cause*, whose unhappy and frustrated hero, unable to find any help from the adults surrounding him, can only act blindly and often brutally; a teenage public crying out for an idol in whom they could identify their own disquiet, nervous dissatisfaction and inexpressible longings; a battery of unscrupulous fan-magazines: such is the context of today's legends. There is barely a teenage film made over the past three years which does not reflect, in some degree, the Dean legend; just as there is barely a film industry outside Hollywood which does not have its own James Dean star. With his death, screen teenagers everywhere closed their ranks, and a film like *Life Begins At 17* could now only be undertaken on the implicit understanding that it ends at 21. The teenager had become an inhabitant of a private world, heavily defended against the community of adults.

To try to understand something of the extremism of Hollywood's teenage cult during the past three years, one has only to look back briefly to the emotional climate following Dean's death. "The career of James Dean has not ended. It has just begun; and remember, God Himself is directing the production." This was the conclusion of the Rev. Xen Harcey's eulogy at the actor's funeral. Two years later, 8,000 letters a month were still being addressed to Dean's home, some asking for souvenirs, such as a piece of his smashed car, others writing to him as if he were still alive. "Dedicated Deans" (430,000 members), Dean's Teens (393,000) and James Dean's Memorial Club (330,000) were just three of the 360 fan clubs which sprang up all over the States. Four magazines appeared, devoted exclusively to his memory. One had a front cover announcing: *JIMMY DEAN RETURNS! Read His own Words from the Beyond*, adding that for five dollars fans could buy a life-size replica of the Dean head, finished in plastic that looked and felt like human flesh.

If Hollywood had the slightest twinge of conscience over its part in all this, then it was not reflected in its production record



The legend: an off-set picture from "The James Dean Story".

for 1957. Unlocking the damp cellar recently vacated by hyper-pituitary apes and blonde-chasing Gill Men, it released the latest thing in creatures: the benzedrine-driven, Dean-crazed hero of *Rock All Night* ("Some have to dance . . . some have to kill!"), *Reform School Girl* ("Boy-hungry wildcats gone mad!") and *Teenage Delinquents* ("Jive-mad, speed-crazy, thrill-thirsting youngsters doing their best to get in their dangerous kicks in a bewildering world"). The next step, *I Was a Teenage Werewolf*, was one of those symbiotic compromises that significantly turn up in the cinema at periods of extreme depression.

In an unguarded moment, Herman Cohen, the 30-year-old producer of American International Pictures, explained that "since 62% of the movie audience was between 15 and 30, and I knew that the movies that were grossing well were horror or rock'n'roll films, I decided to combine them. You don't need big names." Nor, it seemed, a big bank balance: *Teenage Werewolf* cost \$150,000 to make, and by the time it had taken in \$1,700,000 at the box-office several other mushroom-growth companies had swung into action, all protesting the beneficially cathartic effects of their wares. By the end of 1958—the year that seven Egyptian Dragons killed a 15-year-old polio cripple, 19-year-old Charles Starkweather shot, stabbed or clubbed eleven people to death, and two 12-year-old boys held up and murdered a shopkeeper, his clerk and a customer—films of teenage violence amounted to 25% of the total U.S. releases. They included *School for Violence*, *Hot Rod Gang*, *Teenage Caveman* and *How to Make a Monster*.

Attacked from within the industry itself by Jerry Wald ("You may make a few dollars today, but you'll destroy us tomorrow"), James Nicholson, one of the heads of American International, snapped back, "I'd rather send my children to

The parent problem: Mary La Roche, Arthur O'Connell and Sandra Dee in "Gidget".

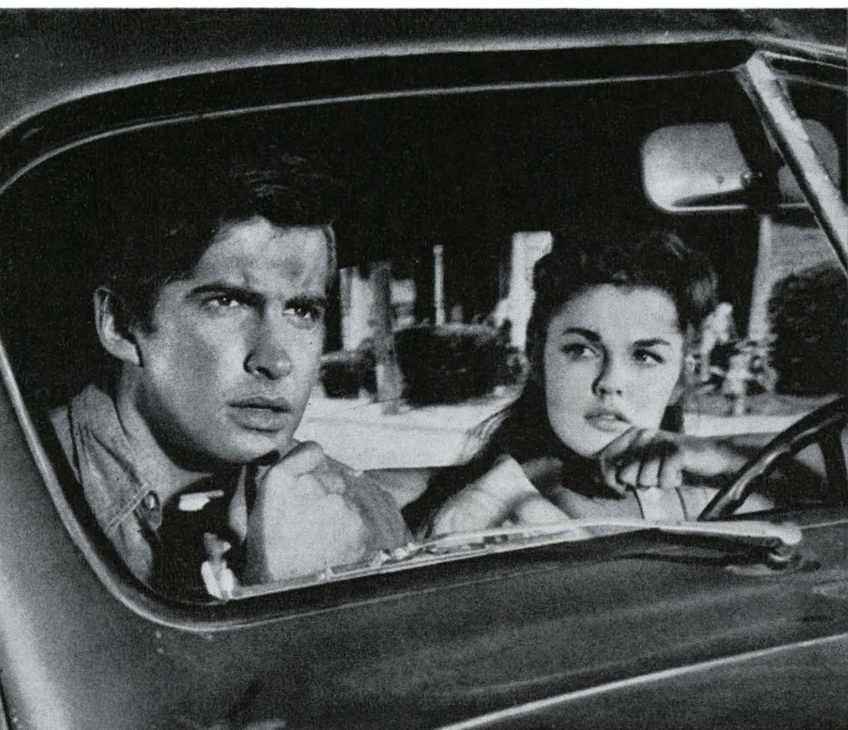


see these pictures than *God's Little Acre*." In fact this was little more than shadow-boxing. Already a decided shift was noticeable, in the recruiting of a large number of teenage stars by the major companies, and a sudden decline in the number of "B" pictures designed exclusively for the teenage audience. Jerry Wald was but one of several leading producers who had gained by example a fuller awareness than ever before of the enormous potentialities of the teenage market.

The potentialities of, but not the responsibility to. Comparing, say, *Gidget* and *Blue Jeans* to the average teenager quickie, there is really very little except production values to choose between them. The latter is generally more violent, but it is a violence copied, together with the stories and details, from *The Wild One*, *On the Waterfront* and *Rebel*. What is lacking is the sheer physical persuasion and the dubious moral tone of the bigger films, neither of which need be mourned. On the other hand some of the actors are quite good: Scott Marlowe, Yale Wexler, Dennis Hopper and Robert Vaughn, all Dean types; John Saxon (in *Cry Tough*, at any rate); John Wayne's son Pat in *The Young Land*, produced by John Ford's son Patrick Ford, and Michael Landon and Richard Rust in *The Legend of Tom Dooley*, both fascinating little Westerns crying out for a decent director.

Similarly it is the young players themselves that one warms to in the major productions: Hope Lange in *The Best of Everything*; Carol Lynley, with her private manner and measured, plaintive address capturing the awful home-made isolation of the girl in *Blue Jeans*; Dean Stockwell in *Compulsion*, James Darren in *Gidget*, Sal Mineo. And the rock'n' roll stars, of course, are tremendously likeable, even if their films are idiotic. Elvis Presley, aggressively bisexual in appeal, knowingly erotic, acting like a crucified houri and singing with a kind of machine-made surrealism; Tommy Sands, defensive, innocent, fraternal, like a sleek puppy; these, Ricky Nelson and the rest, have much the same vitality and scrupulous sense of rehearsal one found years ago in the best Mickey Rooney films.

Yet one trembles for them. As one trembles for their audience. Despite talent that is distinctive without being egotistic, these fresh and eager players seem doomed to appear in hack, formulaic fictions against a back-drop of fan magazine ballyhoo that bears much the same relation to Hollywood as dope sheets to a race track.



"Nancy Sinatra is 18. Since she was a little girl, her heart has been torn by the question, Do I have the most wonderful father in the world—or no father at all?" . . . "Debbie! Beware of This Man!!" (*Modern Screen*); "I'm Teaching Debbie About Men—(No woman knows more about men than Eva Gabor—and no girl has more to learn than Debbie)" . . . "They Warned Me Sal Was A Playboy" (*Motion Picture*); "Just for Sal—You are simply just so cute,/For you there is no substitute./Sal, you really are all man,/And that's why I'm your faithful fan" (Reader's letter in *Photoplay*): in an atmosphere influenced by this kind of thing, it is hardly surprising that the exciting, stimulating films about American youth fail to materialise.

4

Three representative pictures have turned up over the past year tailored exclusively for the teenage market: M-G-M's *High School Confidential!*, Columbia's *Gidget*, Fox's *Blue Jeans*. Together they represent the three main trends of today's teenage product. Each conforms to the pattern of an exhausted genre. *High School Confidential!* is one of several Albert Zugsmith productions masquerading as topical social documents. Its theme, drug addiction in schools, is urgent and real. The treatment perpetuates all the worst faults of *Blackboard Jungle* while adding quite a few of its own: rock'n'roll guest stars, direction by Jack Arnold in the idiom of *The War of the Worlds*, a twist happy ending in which the teenage "junkie" hero is revealed to be a police officer, and an alcoholic nymphomaniac, reunited with her long-absent husband, gets down to a necking session with him in the back of a car doing ninety.

*Gidget* is a teenage musical set at Malibu Beach. It stars the enormously popular Sandra Dee as a passionate surfing addict who is the despair of her boy-conscious parents and friends, Cliff Robertson as a lethargic young cynic who dreams romantically of life on a South Sea Island, without work, without responsibilities, and James Darren as a bronzed, pectorally magnificent college boy. It has all been done before, by the Italians, in *Poveri Ma Belli* (for that matter in *The Student Prince*), but one is still prepared to like it. Yet the film is lifeless, its characters dutifully quaint but never funny, its emotional pitch wavering from timid satire to sentimentality, and its direction (Paul Wendkos) inhibited by a kind of slogging amateurishness. Teenagers have a more spontaneous gaiety than this: and surely deserve something a little more up-to-date.

Conscientiousness is also the key-note of *Blue Jeans*, which tackles with the best of intentions a troubled teenage sex drama embedded in a sociological groundwork. The fifteen-year-old son of fond but unhelpful parents (Brandon de Wilde) takes refuge in the basement, in a world of beer and poker and prurient jokes with a boasting pal, and of experimental sex with a professor's daughter (Carol Lynley). The girl becomes pregnant. The boy tries to signal to his parents but fails to get through, then forges one of his father's cheques to pay for an abortion. After a car chase by night, with the girl snatched from the operating table in the nick of time, everything suddenly comes out so well that the producer is reported to be mulling over a sequel: what happens after the baby arrives. One isn't surprised. The film has touching moments, good dialogue between the boy and his pal, and situations in which it is sufficient just to be very young, and in trouble; but Philip Dunne's handling, especially after the ominous arrival of the abortionist's black limousine at dead of night, complete with sinister "sister," is sheer Old Oaken Bucket. And, as in *Gidget*, there is no conviction whatever in the more immediately topical drama of the barriers between generations, the dangers

(continued on page 51)

"Their world is their own, and private . . ."  
George Hamilton and Luana Patten in  
Minnelli's "Home from the Hill".





"The House under the Rocks".

## Yesterday *and tomorrow*

New Hungarian Films | ROBERT VAS

"THE HUNGARIAN FILM-MAKER IS more than a story-teller and more than a propagandist: he is a man of taste, and he is also a man of conscience." This was written in August, 1956, by the Paris correspondent of SIGHT AND SOUND; he had just visited the Hungarian studios, where he found an atmosphere of "resourcefulness, improvisation and free-running imagination." Those, indeed, were the first real "great days" in the history of Hungarian cinema, when, with the gradual thawing of intellectual dictatorship, film-makers burst into a feverish search for self-expression. Everyone offered something of his own. One surprise followed another: exciting and personal films from new and "old" directors (Makk, Máriássy, Ranódy, Várkonyi); outspoken, thoughtful films, delicately shaded and visually elegant—crowned by the triumphant circling of Fábri's merry-go-round. It all celebrated the rise of a true Hungarian film style, born from no real traditions but out of the talent of its workers and their long-desired opportunity to

tell the truth. The world began to take note of this voice, for it was a new one: something not of the West, yet not of the East either. The films had a sort of refined purity and humanity; they praised healthy, dignified human feelings with the freshness of youth. They carried within them a suggestion of repressed power, held in check but gathering to break loose.

When, some months later, Louis Marcorelles' article was in fact published, the outbreak had already been suppressed and an epoch was over. The post-1956 régime could not afford to keep alive the boiling atmosphere of the two previous years. But those years were sufficient to prove how rich the Hungarian cinema is in talent and to establish it on a European level. They reinforced its confidence for the future.

After a brief and confused period of stagnation, the writer József Darvas, a former right-hand man of Rákosi, became director of the state film factory. Many organisational changes were put into operation, some of them beneficial. The smaller



independent production units (patterned after the Polish system) were intended to ensure more creative freedom as well as strengthening the director's personal responsibility. In addition, young talents (Fehér, Szemes, Herskó) were given their first opportunities. Films like *A Sunday Romance* and *The Iron Flower* managed to salvage something of the pre-revolutionary quality. Great advances were also made in the field of film appreciation.

But all these benefits of what Zoltán Várkonyi called "the management of authority" become artificial when the authority is itself a dictatorial one. For the revival of autocracy soon became evident in the film industry. Official planning again prescribed the obligatory prestige pictures about certain "central problems." Várkonyi's *Bitter Truth* (1956) and Tamás Banovich's *The Sneezed Away Empire* (1956: a fable about a bumptious monarch cut down to size) have been kept in cans ever since. The Máriássy's *Suburban Legend* (1957), a naturalistic and bitterly pessimistic picture set in a workers' tenement in the 1930's (though originally planned as a contemporary story), was banned for its "hopelessness and falsification of worker people."

As a humiliating "verification", the writer-director couple attended factory meetings to hear the "voice of the people." A brief extract from an article in *Elet és Irodalom* about such a meeting recalls a human drama and also the fearful structure of thought control. "True, admitted the author, the film has inequalities; but the writer has a right to show the struggles of the miserable for something better, just as Gorki did in *The Lower Depths*. A worker cut in: 'But Gorki also showed the sociological background. The reasons!' Judith Máriássy here ran out of arguments . . ."

And also out of creative ambition. For free thought must suffer in a captive society. In the last three exploratory years, no one has really found his own artistic personality. The three later films by Imre Fehér seem no match for his *A Sunday Romance* (1956-57), while Zoltán Fábri has turned from his soaring pictorial lyricism to erotic comedy and a cool, theoretical visual style. Occasionally an artist rises above the average (Ranódy's *Danse Macabre*, Várkonyi's *Pillar of Salt*),

"Yesterday": "the lieutenant-cowboy rescues his father from the bandits with a cavalry charge."



but the rich and passionate emotions of the pre-revolution era are not to be found in any of the new Hungarian pictures.

As autocratic control again became part of the pattern of life, the cinema began to catch up with the new demands. Hungarian audiences ignored *Rashomon* or *La Strada*, but queued up for the musical *schmaltz* of a romance between a gipsy and a baroness. Routine problem pieces about family life or young people (*Two Confessions*, *Spiral Staircase*) tried to gloss over a failure to confront the real issues; and a series of comedies, farces, musicals, and films about dogs and sportsmen, some tasteful and some third-rate, endeavoured to brighten a little the long and tedious process of survival. "Our film art," noted *Elet és Irodalom* in 1957, "does not strive to fulfil its wonderful socialist mission: to reflect truth . . ." "Our slogan is: to survive!" wrote an anonymous correspondent from present-day Budapest, "to face it out, without if possible being reduced to meanness, and without becoming disillusioned in oneself."

\* \* \*

One of the latest productions to come out of Hungary, *House Under the Rocks*, belongs in many ways to the "line" of *A Sunday Romance* and *The Iron Flower*. It is the first major work of a young artist, Károly Makk; it has a script of literary value (a rare thing in recent Hungarian films); and above all, like the other two, it was inspired not by political necessity but by purely artistic considerations—the effort to handle a tragic story psychologically, to keep it flowing between the banks of mood and lyricism. The lack of constraint, the lively determination to find its own way, make *House under the Rocks* an important as well as an exacting venture.

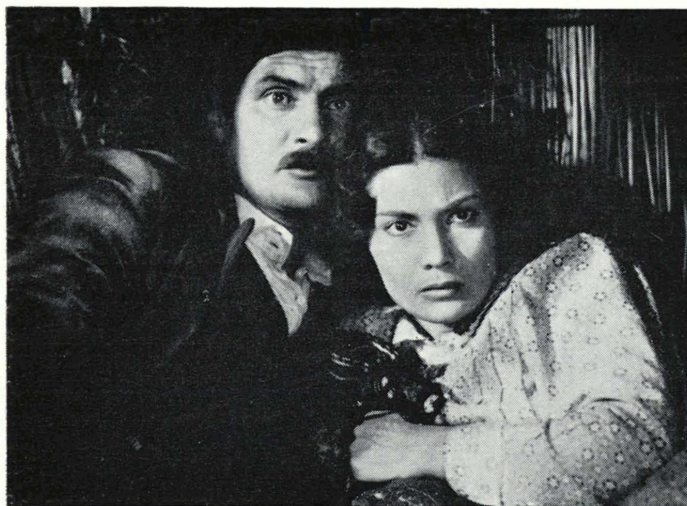
The story concerns three people—a returned prisoner of war, his second wife and the possessive, hunchback sister-in-law of his first marriage—all striving after personal happiness yet suffocated by their dependence on each other. The atmosphere is established with considerable style: the house under the extinct volcano might be the setting for a ballad, a tragedy having its origins in popular folklore. Makk achieves a kind of harsh lyricism, shows a feeling for landscape and people, a technical command in building up the "big scenes" which punctuate the picture, and a determination to get to the bottom of his characters. Even the hunchback Tera, though her part balances on the edge of melodrama, seems sufficiently convincing.

Then, with his tragedy foreshadowed, Makk loses his grip on the picture. The plot becomes more openly concerned with the psychology of the characters, but the film is unable to throw enough light on their emotions to make them credible, and we are left only with a melodrama. Even the devices become commonplace: the keyed-up tension in the house is expressed through the image of a moth flitting into the flame of a paraffin lamp. The impressive harshness of the early scenes turns to sadism; the trio do violence to their characters as we have understood them; and the final murder of Tera comes not as a tragic full stop but simply as an elaborate melodramatic climax.

Even a work of considerable finesse (which *House under the Rocks* undeniably remains) has a certain coarseness about it; and this is a fairly common fault in Hungarian films. Feelings too often find expression through overt clichés, dialogue through a too precisely articulated stage language. In a Hungarian film we are told almost everything, sometimes more than once, and if something has to remain unsaid, this too is pointed out. One often feels the presence in the background of a dramatic workshop where all the half-tones and exit lines have been carefully worked out. When Professor Hannibal, for instance, shows his little family how to make pancakes just before setting out for a hostile public rally, we can be sure that he will never return.

The origins of this heavy-handedness can be found in the mawkish "photoplays" of the 1930's (set usually in a "white telephone" milieu) or in the films of the Stalinist era, when the symbolic telephone, repainted with a more realistic glaze, was





Félix Máriássy's "*Smugglers*": "... poetic unfulfilment".

transferred to the office of the party secretary and the message had to be almost spoken out. More profoundly: the Hungarian artist, isolated in a small country with a difficult language, yet anxious to bring national problems home to the widest possible audience, has always been forced to express himself as clearly as possible. Hungary's cinema is not reflective: the national character—its directness and frankness, its broad intonations and readiness to meet issues face to face—is expressed through a lyrical film style. The best moments of Hungarian cinema, in fact, are those of pure, unashamed lyricism: the wedding-dance in *Merry-Go-Round*, the funeral in *Discord*, the love scene in *Springtime in Budapest*, the meeting and dinner in *A Sunday Romance*, the little boys of *The Sledge*, with their black fur caps against the white snow. These moments occur when a director is able in his own way to tap this basic lyricism. It is not accidental that these scenes are also psychologically the most convincing.

This quality of Hungarian cinema becomes more striking when one compares it with that of Poland. The depth, complexity and intellectualism of Polish films have only pale equivalents in Hungary. But the latter cinema seems more of the people, more ingenuous and vital in its emotionalism, when set against the half-tones and the baroque decadence of some Polish pictures. In a seriously-meant Hungarian film there is no escapism: if this cinema wants to be escapist it will be openly so, producing a farce or a sports film. True, it lacks the stimulating ferment of Polish film-making: it is a little further from the West, and it has perhaps fewer talents and rather more provincialism. Both cinemas have to balance on a tight-rope of "useful" and "harmful" truth. But the Polish radicalism is the more uncompromising.

That is why Poland would never produce a film like *Yesterday* (1959: director, Márton Keleti). According to the Hungarian press, this is "the first openly direct picture about the counter-revolution": and it is certainly such in its total—its almost honest—dishonesty. Unlike its predecessor, *At Midnight*, *Yesterday* does not evade ticklish issues. If it is a lie, then let it be a big one! For the dispassionate onlooker, *Yesterday* is a straightforward propaganda piece with the usual declamatory acting, a reliable director (owner of three state prizes but no personal style), and a heavily simplified story-line. To a spectator more passionately involved, it seems a pitiful attempt to reduce history (and, indeed, heroic history) to trash.

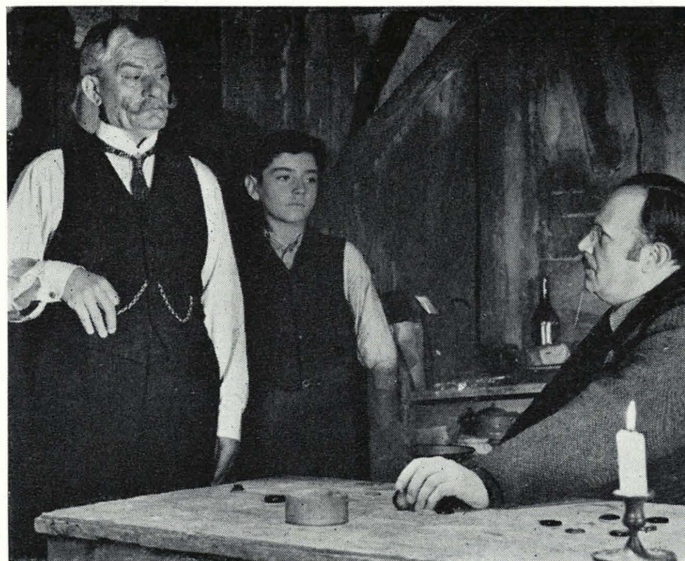
The film opens convincingly, with a revolutionary crowd advancing on a provincial barracks in which some of the soldiers intend to stand aside from the fight. The balance here

is fair; and the director (helped by crowd playing of almost immoderate enthusiasm) re-creates some of the real feeling of October, 1956. Then, step by step, we are told first that the crowd is only a bewildered rabble; then that it is led by an "imperialist" from "over there"; then that the landowner is just a wolf in sheep's clothing. Finally the class-conscious colonel can claim to be the moral victor: he wanted to shoot into the crowd at the outset, but hesitated in the absence of superior orders... Naturally, the first shots come from the Colts of the "counter-revolutionary bandits". The lieutenant-cowboy, just regaining his own sense of class-consciousness, rescues his father (already class-conscious) from the bandits with a cavalry charge. They fight it out, but at the last moment—and to the strains of Beethoven's *Egmont Overture*—the armoured relief arrives... All this in the "first Hungarian picture in which the actors wore no make-up, thereby increasing the impact of reality."

The title *Yesterday* is in some ways symbolic. For this picture arduously contrives to include all given political slogans in its 90 flat minutes, evoking, like a warning, the absurd schematism of the Stalinist "yesterday". But the childlike prototypes of that era—the workman with his toothpaste smile, the hostile saboteur of a chief engineer—are characters of Dostoevskian depth compared with the "serious" personalities of this insignificant film, which brings the problems of the nation down to the level of Viennese operetta. The story of *Yesterday* is played out in the provinces, far from the centre of the revolt; and the revolt itself is shown in terms of its obviously weak elements, blown up as though these were dominating factors. Russian tanks are never seen—as though the picture were not convincing enough for them to drive into it. That a film of such obvious prestige and "political importance" should need to make so many clumsy concessions seems in itself an admission. Significantly, a sequel to *Yesterday* is already in production.

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After seeing *Yesterday*, one can measure the importance of Károly Makk's declaration: "We may have made a mistake when (in *House under the Rocks*) we over-emphasised the universal human message and gave little place to the concrete instance. But I still think that we must keep going *this* way to lift Hungarian cinema out of its emotional poverty." *Sleepless Years* (1959: directed by Félix Máriássy) offers further evidence of the truth of this statement. Like his *Smugglers*, this sets out to be a film about oppression and man's longing for freedom and happiness; but the idea of human dignity, radiating so powerfully from *Smugglers*, is here exploited for trivial ends. The film's five novelettes, loosely linked by the history of a



Máriássy's "*Sleepless Years*": proletarian tableaux vivants.



metal-works in a suburb of Budapest, are designed to draw a unified picture of the struggles and hopes of the Hungarian working class between 1916 and 1942. The view is that of an onlooker, an intellectual sympathiser. But Máriássy's mistake is fundamental: he does not begin with the real, human truth of his material. Instead he adapts some key figures and dramatised incidents to serve political arguments, and the result is a film which looks like a shadow of its own intentions.

Historical turning-points are ridiculously simplified: when the factory manager is in trouble and prays to the workers, for instance, we are in the First Proletarian Government of 1919. One morning he smiles—and the régime has been suppressed. Many scenes, in fact, remind one of the workers' own *tableaux vivants* (of the 1919 episode), which portray Management in a top hat, the Worker with a hammer and Truth robed in white. Máriássy views these *tableaux* figures with a warm irony: but when it comes to his own characters he expects us to take them seriously. His presentation of proletarian groups recalls Soviet films of the 1930's; while the human detail again reveals the lasting influence neo-realism has had on Máriássy (in common with many other Hungarian directors). In some sympathetic flashes, in atmospheric shots of the muddy factory yard, and in a few well-chosen visual symbols, we get a glimpse of his talent and the warm generosity of his attitude to life.

There is considerable goodwill behind Máriássy's film and it is not his fault that it lacks real conviction. On the contrary: the film itself seems like a search for conviction. After the disillusioned naturalism of *Suburban Legend* and the poetic unfulfilment of *Smugglers*, it seems as though Máriássy is trying here to convince himself through a kind of nostalgic idealism. (Look at these people: see, they believe in something unreservedly, with their entire being . . .) The director might almost be listening to the words of one of his characters, the pathetic old Bolshevik porter: "in socialism, even saccharine is sweeter than sugar under capitalism." But the film's failure proves the hopeless impossibility of such self-persuasion.

It is worth recalling here Máriássy's words in a recent BBC interview. He wanted, he said, to make a film "about the changes now going on in Hungary, especially among the peasants . . . Now they are beginning to get machinery, to buy television sets, radios; to use modern farming techniques. I think this will change their . . . whole attitude to life. Now that peasants' children are going to the universities, they won't any longer want to live in the old way . . ." and so on. Nobody doubts that these facts are true. But I still feel that these are not the words an artist uses in outlining his approach to a subject. They seem rather to come from a sincere, uncertain man who is looking for conviction, since without belief there can be no artistic creation. "Are you very keen," asked the interviewer, "that your film should reflect these changes?" . . . "I think," Máriássy answered, "if one makes a good picture about them, one should help them . . ."

This is perhaps the simplest and most meaningful definition of the aim of patriotic art. And that such honest devotion on

the part of the artist so often becomes mediocrity when translated to the screen, illustrates one of the basic contradictions and limitations of mental autocracy. Poised between two cultures, the Hungarian cinema might have given something to the world which no one else could express. But, unhappily, things turned out differently—and mediocrity became the openly-admitted level of Hungarian films. "It is not a threat any more," said József Darvas at a film-workers' meeting in May, 1959, "but a fact. Grey mediocrity reveals itself in the choice of subject, in the unconcern about and secondary nature of the message, in the weakness of literary treatment . . . Our ventures to produce real dramas about our contemporary life successively end in failure." A reflection of this is found in the films of 1959: four out of 17 were political prestige pictures; seven were comedies. Only one (*Sword and Dice*) was originally written for the screen by a writer of real quality.

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My intention here is not to paint an overall picture of Hungarian cinema, appreciating its best achievements, nor to hold a funeral oration because of some recent failures. I have not yet been able to see László Ranódy's *For Whom the Larks Sing*, which apparently recaptures something of his earlier tender lyricism, nor the new films by some young directors (Tamás Fejér, Gyula Mészáros, László Nádasi). These have not been very favourably reviewed in the Hungarian press, but seemingly set out realistically to portray city life. And we can look forward with some expectation to the films now being made by Máriássy and Fábri. My intention in this article, though, is to outline a general atmosphere of uncertainty, a sort of marking time which has become almost a phenomenon of art in the Iron Curtain countries—Poland excepted. This inevitable stabilisation of mediocrity poses critical questions which deserve attention. What can we expect from the Hungarian cinema? And what of the entire "uneasy East"? Does art live or just survive in a totalitarian régime? Is a film like *Yesterday* also the tomorrow of the Hungarian cinema? Can we expect surprises . . . or are a few outstanding surprises all that we can expect?

Totalitarianism excludes the possibility of any concession on crucial issues, but to escape from stagnation the principal need is to ensure more creative freedom. Not the freedom to produce films without intellectual content, but to approach a subject in its "universally human" aspects without falsification or adornment. Not to make so many routine prestige pictures, and to bring into effect the less rigid organisational structure mentioned in Mr. Darvas' report. Cinema audiences should be educated not merely through a £3 million programme for rebuilding cinemas themselves, but through a freshening up of their programmes with more and better imports from the West. Finally: everything should be done which helps to induce a state of artistic excitement, including, for instance, the production of more short and experimental films. Hungarian film-makers want to "see" filmically, though the result is often excessive stylisation of a kind which reaches its climax in Fábri's *Anna* and in the magazine articles which praised its self-conscious montage sequences as an example to be followed. This visual hunger, especially among the younger film-makers, should be guided so that it becomes a restrained, forceful means of expression. They need, in the first place, to go abroad, to learn to distinguish the valid styles from the barren and out-dated ones: a study-tour, even a brief one, may bring invaluable experience. There is nothing to be afraid of: they will surely return—for they want to make pictures in Hungary and about Hungary. They want to make good pictures: they want to help. For they are "men of taste and they are also men of conscience."

Return to lyricism:  
Ranódy's "*For Whom the Larks Sing*".





# Film Reviews

## OUR MAN IN HAVANA

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN Graham Greene's novels and his "entertainments" has always seemed a fairly fine one. The characters are people of the same kind, the disappointed, the betrayed and the betrayers; the backgrounds are always established with that acute reporter's instinct for the key detail; even the incidents overlap. *The Quiet American*, for instance, showed Greene on the borderline, borrowing the kind of suspense and violence he uses for his "entertainments" to illuminate the crisis of conscience which is always central to his more serious novels. In *Our Man in Havana* (Columbia), this time adapted by Greene from his own novel, the balance is even finer. The plot opens on farce, but farce firmly anchored to the ground by the precision of detail and atmosphere; it moves on to hallucinatory unreality; it turns on its tracks when the dream becomes nightmare—still keeping carefully in reserve the farcical twist which will again turn the whole thing into a conceit. An entertainment, certainly, but one which depends on hair-trigger adjustments of mood.

Sir Carol Reed, resuming his partnership with Greene after several years, has been given a subject more or less hand-made for him. He could scarcely go wrong; but it is a little sad, when one looks back to the evenly matched teamwork of *The Third Man*, to note that the writer now seems more agile than the director. Greene's novel scored as cleanly as a knock-out. Sir Carol's film wins on points, but it is sometimes a near thing; and it is the director's footwork, his ability to manoeuvre his way through all the shifting moods of the story, which seems to have slowed up with the years.

The central character, Wormold, doting on his horse-infatuated daughter and relying on his slippery Cuban assistant to keep the vacuum cleaner shop running, is unmistakably a Greene hero. The wrong wife, the wrong public school, the wrong job, even the wrong brand of Christianity, seem to lurk in the shadowy background of his life. When he takes his chance to make some money quickly, accepting his preposterous enlistment into the secret service, he can only operate as "our man in Havana" on a level of pure fantasy. He invents sub-agents; he sends them out on non-existent missions; he sits up at night making sketches of vacuum cleaner parts, which he despatches to Whitehall as drawings of gigantic secret weapons under construction in mountain hide-outs. But the point is that Wormold's precarious fantasies can all too easily be absorbed into other people's nightmares. Whitehall takes him seriously and sends out reinforcements. The anonymous other side takes him seriously, murders a supposed agent and drives his closest friend into one of those crucial acts of betrayal essential to any Greene fiction. The police chief takes him seriously enough to deport him.

For "M," the formidable admiral who sends James Bond out on his travels, Graham Greene substitutes "C" (Ralph Richardson), a man so splendidly entrenched in Whitehall that he finds it a little difficult to distinguish the East from the West Indies on a map, or to conceive of a situation which cannot be adjusted to Civil Service logic. His agent for the Caribbean is played by Noël Coward; and it is this performance which is the film's surest stroke. With his mandarin detachment, his casual if exasperated instructions in the use of codes and secret inks, his obsession with professional ritual (a door must be shut on a private conference, even if it is a door composed only of a few flimsy slats), Hawthorne is a majestic caricature. Coward plays him with a becoming gravity, manners impeccable, umbrella always at the ready; and his timing is as immaculate as his appearance.

All the Whitehall scenes are beautiful exercises in restrained parody, as is the whole episode of Wormold's recruitment and his woebegone haunting of the Country Club in an attempt to enlist real agents of his own. Guinness' performance, though as intelligent as always, perhaps slightly overdoes the elusiveness of Wormold.



The secret agents: Noël Coward and Alec Guinness in "Our Man in Havana".

Wistful, vulnerable, living on dreams of finishing schools for his daughter and a quiet, dignified retreat to Kensington, he still has finally to emerge as a man capable of eluding an assassination attempt and stealing a revolver from the police chief. Neither Guinness nor the director entirely manages to carry off this transition.

Throughout, the action keeps a more or less even pace. The humour is held carefully in check, the parody never allowed to run off the rails as it did in a film like Huston's *Beat the Devil*. But the tone remains too steady and cautious when the plot begins to juggle irony, suspense, hints of tragedy, and such characteristic Greene episodes as the discussion with the police chief on torture ("one never tortures except by mutual agreement") or the scene in which the old German doctor, dressed up in all the regalia of a Prussian officer of the Kaiser's war, confronts his own illusions. These and other sequences in the film's second half need a kind of imaginative tension and lucidity which Reed really only brings off in a single (though admittedly climactic) episode: Wormold's cat-and-mouse game with the rival agent who has murdered his friend. Even here, a good deal of the credit goes to Paul Rogers' performance, with its bland surface and edgy undertones. In this episode, settings (the smoky bar, the theatrical emptiness of city streets at night), performances and direction all come sharply together to crystallise a mood. But in spite of Oswald Morris' camerawork, which does more for Havana than the too pervasive jinglings of the Cuban Rhythm Band, and in spite of the high level of performance (Burl Ives as the doctor, Ernie Kovacs as the police chief, as well as the players already mentioned), it is certainty of touch that *Our Man in Havana* too often misses.

In the years since *The Third Man*, Reed has perhaps become a more solid and disciplined director. He knows what he wants, he side-steps the over-obvious, he has a veteran's confidence. But ten years ago, one feels, he would have responded more immediately to this subject, with its atmosphere of farce tinged with menace and threats dissolving into absurdity. *Our Man in Havana* needs imaginative extravagance. It is, after all, one of its author's "entertainments."

PENELOPE HOUSTON





"The Horse Soldiers".

## THE HORSE SOLDIERS

IT IS SOME YEARS NOW since John Ford told Lindsay Anderson "I take a script and I just do it." Perhaps it was just one of those things that Ford says, and was never true; or perhaps it is no longer true. For (from all accounts) Ford had quite a lot to say about the revision of the script of *The Horse Soldiers* (United Artists) before he actually "did it." Even so it is not a very good script. It is adapted from Harold Sinclair's novel, which was fairly closely based on the historic facts of Grierson's Raid—a sortie by Northern cavalry 300 miles into Southern territory, to cut a vital rail supply route. John Lee Mahin and Martin Rackin, the producers as well as the writers of the film, have felt it necessary to elaborate this simple action. The leader of the troop (John Wayne) is now brought into conflict with a surgeon attached to the brigade (William Holden); and his irrational resentment of the medical profession is tediously traced to the incident of his wife's death years before. The party is further handicapped with a woman prisoner, who must be taken into action with it.

Script apart, however, the theme—soldiers in general and the Civil War in particular—is one to which Ford could hardly fail to respond. His special interest here seems to be in the contrast between war itself and the men who fight it. War, as one of the characters remarks, is not a very civilised business; but soldiers—North or South—retain their basic human qualities, the same gentleness or callousness, the courtesy or opportunism or insobriety which would mark them in civilian life. One of the cavalry scouts is called "The Deacon" and successfully combines his military duties with his civilian inclinations to be a preacher.

Ford is, eventually, less dependent upon scripts than most directors—perhaps because, trained in the silent cinema, his approach to the cinema is still first and foremost visual, not literary. When the theme interests him, as it does here, the words do not matter much. They are only the dry bones around which he builds the worlds of his own generous and personal vision.

The best scenes in *The Horse Soldiers* are all Ford. They are the battle-pieces (Newton Station, shot in one day, is a marvel), the magnificent images of the cavalry, triumphant or dejected, riding across great landscapes, or seen through high marsh grass, or silhouetted against skylines. And again, the small, intimate scenes which Ford throws up against these larger, general ones: the dying young soldier, the camp-fire talk, the old sweats who try to make up to the woman prisoner for the death of her coloured maid by shy little extra attentions and the gift of a broken piece of looking-glass.

Very characteristic, too, is the extraordinary sequence when, for want of any other forces, the cadets of a junior military academy—boys of ten and twelve and fourteen—are called out to face the Northern cavalry. They march out, proud and pathetic, to the music of a poor little fife and drum band, led by their aged, limping headmaster, who for all that he is bent, still stands a head or more higher than the tallest of his troops. Two of their companions—excused duties because they have mumps—watch, amazed and envious, from a balcony. And on the road there is a racket because one of the boys won't fall out in response to the appeals of his war-widowed mother. This incident, too, is based on fact; the real children of 1863 were massacred. For his own purposes, Ford gives it a happy ending. Still it remains as tragic as comic in its overtones, inexplicably moving.

It is always extraordinary to see how actors respond to Ford's direction; neither Wayne nor Holden has ever worked so easily or so expressively as in his hands. He was not, one feels, particularly interested in the character of the Southern lady prisoner, nor in the actress who plays her; in the circumstances Constance Towers is as satisfactory as can be expected, aiming hard at extremes of hoydenishness and tenderness to which she is temperamentally unequal.

As with any Ford film, the great pleasure lies in the minor figures—the soldiers who chaff, the others who are alternately shy and bold in their wardship of the female prisoners, Althea Gibson as the coloured maid. Few of Ford's veterans remain today; but it is



nostalgic to see the aged Russell Simpson in a small part. Hoot Gibson—whom Ford directed as early as 1917, as well as in his first starring picture, *Action* (1921)—also plays a minor role as one of the cavalry contingent.

It would be wrong to pretend that this is one of Ford's major films. The script's too frequent banality, its ranging formlessness, are against that. But it is a rich and characteristic work, full of pleasures, and with the unmistakable mark of the cinema's most enduring master.

DAVID ROBINSON

## THE SAVAGE EYE and CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, U.S.A.

THOUGH THE SAVAGE EYE was enthusiastically received at the Edinburgh Festival, and though *Crime and Punishment, U.S.A.* was made by the directors of that brilliant short *Time Out of War*, neither film could be called well made. They are often naive, often pretentious. Yet they are both interesting; and, oddly enough, interesting in the same way—as documents. Both films project a similar picture of a society so strange and extreme that one is led to believe it belongs less to the world of present-day America than to the world of fantasy.

Paradoxically enough, this fantasy is mainly worked out in the style of a documentary. This is especially true of *The Savage Eye* (Contemporary), where actuality shots of women convulsed at a faith-healing service, of car crashes with their bleeding, stunned victims and of the tired lust of spectators at a strip-tease, build up an image of life in Los Angeles. Although the image is one-sided, its exclusions and insistences force us into accepting it as typical of a whole society whose people are satiated and pampered, and yet who are also restless, violent and bored. It would be true to say that the one ideology common to all these people—that the primary fact of life is the ceaseless striving to satisfy the physical appetites to the exclusion of everything else—has failed them. The anonymous world around them, of new cars and full shops, is an ironic comment on their misery. It is to the credit of this film that it shows us in great detail how these dispirited folk struggle to find a new identity, a new ideology, a new sensation, by what are often grotesque means: fat old women seek rebirth through gymnastics or weep at the funeral of a dog, whilst transvestites shimmer and sadists find ecstasy at a wrestling match. All of them, and especially a colony of divorcees, wait sheepishly for Love.

That all this is bitterly funny is not surprising, for in a world where starvation is still a major fact it is difficult to take these people seriously. It is difficult to praise or blame them for their behaviour. Now this is an odd comment to make on any society and quite baffling, until one notices that even the most ravaged of these passing faces has the sulky unhappiness we associate with lost children; then one realises that this is a world where no one has grown up, where people still experiment with living.

*The Savage Eye* doesn't make this point clearly, but then it is hard to see what the film is clear about. There is little discrimination in the location photography, which muddles together the fascinating and the obvious. Seemingly to compensate for this, the story leashed to all these documentary shots is of a self-pitying divorcee, Judith McGuire (played by Barbara Baxley), who half-heartedly seeks a meaningful way of life and through whose "savage eye" we see Los Angeles. The inability to explore Judith's character, the ineffectual transition from self-pity to her final affirmation, and the floundering rhetoric by which she converses with a *persona* which modestly describes itself as "your wild dreamer, your hunchback creator, your god, your double," reinforce our feeling that Ben Maddow, Sidney Meyers and Joseph Strick, the makers of this film, are in much the same predicament as the society they are dealing with. They too lack a viewpoint from which to present their material.

To work out a viewpoint or an ideology requires strenuous thought and action, but the most striking feature both of this film and of *Crime and Punishment, U.S.A.* (A.B.-Pathé) is the failure of their protagonists to do so, the passive way in which they face life. Both films have strong family likenesses to Richard Fleischer's *Compulsion*, for Judith is as much compelled by her neuroses to wander through Los Angeles as the American Raskolnikov is

compelled to kill the old pawnbroker. Judith is always passive; she is handled by anonymous nurses and doctors and allows herself to be seduced by a man she loathes. If "savage" presupposes some moral indignation then this film is curiously misnamed, for Judith looks at Los Angeles with the eye of a cod. The nearest she gets to a moral protest is in such feeble remarks as: "So God created man. He made a big mistake."

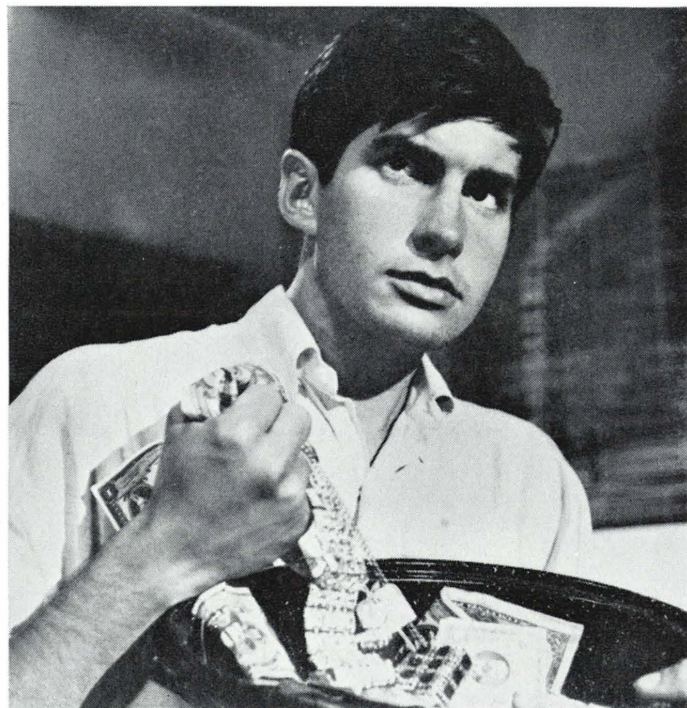
*The Savage Eye* was several years in the making. Though *Crime and Punishment, U.S.A.* has the haphazard quality of a B-feature, it is in many ways more persuasive. The more adolescent elements of Dostoevski's novel lend themselves well to the fantasy world common to both these films—in its experiments with living, in the passivity of Raskolnikov towards the father-figures of the investigator and the blackmailer, and in the facile metaphysical theories. (A nice touch is Sonya reading not the Bible to Raskolnikov but one of the beatnik texts.) As far as they have gone, the directors Denis and Terry Sanders have brought out firmly the main points of the story, and cajoled good performances out of John Harding, Frank Silvera and George Hamilton; with Mary Murphy's delicate and nervous Sonya they have been particularly successful. But their most effective touch has been to transpose the action from Saint Petersburg to Santa Monica, a seaside resort out of season. With its cool jazz drifting past empty rococo fun palaces, its damp beach houses, and always the pervading sea, *Crime and Punishment, U.S.A.* presents far more effectively than do the banalities of *The Savage Eye* the anxiety and despair of its seedy characters.

ERIC RHODE

## ON THE BEACH

THE DEATH WISH SEEMS to be growing stronger. That, at least, is the first conclusion one draws from Stanley Kramer's *On the Beach* (United Artists), which is going to make a lot of money out of some almost necrophilic lingering over the torments of the last months in the last city, the atomic war fought to a standstill of destruction, the machinery run down, the survivors with nothing left to wait for but the slow, final drift of the radio-active clouds. The tired people of Melbourne queue up for government-issued suicide pills; the Salvation Army band beats out a last hymn under the minatory banner "There is Still Time . . . Brother"; the U.S. submarine sets out on a last mission, taking its crew back to die in their own country—and from the cliff-top Ava Gardner waves goodbye, delicately windswept, imperturbably photogenic.

That, partly, defines what is wrong with this adaptation of Nevil Shute's uneasily prophetic best-seller. The four leading players,



The American Raskolnikov: George Hamilton in "Crime and Punishment, U.S.A."



Gregory Peck, Ava Gardner, Fred Astaire and Anthony Perkins, add up to a formidable battery of Hollywood fire-power. However ruefully wrinkled Fred Astaire allows himself to appear, however sternly Gregory Peck stares into the distance and Ava Gardner rations her make-up, Stanley Kramer is unlikely to convince anyone that this quartet is in imminent danger of any kind of extinction. They are symbols, when the subject essentially needs people; and they bring with them all the inescapable Hollywood problems. Will Mr. Peck manage a final clinch with Miss Gardner; will Fred Astaire's Ferrari win the last motor race to be held on earth; will Anthony Perkins compel his distraughtly clinging wife to face reality? A film which has to spell out its story of the last weeks of human existence in terms of this kind of question and answer is suffering from a painful shortage of imaginative nourishment.

Done with even a vestigial grasp of what it is really about, *On the Beach* should have been a frightening document of disintegration, as well as the strongest possible piece of pamphleteering for the Nuclear Disarmament Campaign. The arguments, certainly, are there, although they are characteristically put into the mouth of the guiltily and ineffectually alcoholic nuclear physicist (Fred Astaire). Harshly and extremely well shot by an Italian neo-realist cameraman, Giuseppe Rottuno, the film has the right look of grainy austerity. When the submarine breaks the surface of San Francisco Bay, and the film presents a periscope view of motionless streets, a dead city caught in a trance-like silence, a *frisson* is communicated. The queue for suicide pills, again, is filmed laconically, its images of disciplined defeat made telling by the careful withholding of comment.

But the moments Stanley Kramer and his writers, John Paxton and James Lee Barrett, have got right are extravagantly outnumbered by those in which they have blundered into errors of response, judgment, emotional tone. The scene of the motor race, for instance, is an intolerably callous miscalculation. Proudly, the synopsis draws attention to the "16 high speed smash-ups and numerous skids, spill-outs, collisions, near-misses," so daringly and ingeniously staged in this suicide race. The result is brilliantly achieved, as a technical exercise in carnage; morally, it comes across as nothing more than a direct appeal to the sadistic instinct in the audience. If the film can view the piled-up slaughter of this race track with such equanimity, calculate its elementary tensions so precisely, then its whole attitude of horrified anger at the prospect of the wider disaster becomes suspect. And scenes like the little dialogue between the submarine captain and the man who has swum ashore at San Francisco, to die on his own terms and on his home ground, are almost equally misjudged. The attitude here is the sentimental effect achieved through conscious understatement, making for the most deceptive brand of emotional faking.

Stanley Kramer, though, remains one of the most transparently well-intentioned among the senior talents working in Hollywood. As in *The Defiant Ones*, he is not just playing with a timely but sensational fiction: he clearly conceives his film as a warning, propaganda addressed to the world. He arranges simultaneous premieres in eighteen cities; his distributors take a full-page advertisement in *The Times*, the ultimate accolade for a prestige production. It would no doubt horrify everyone concerned with this long, serious and expensive film to suggest that it is the kind of production which boomerangs; that it paints the most intolerable picture in the most effortlessly romantic way, with its sad little tilted-camera parting drink between naval officer and faithful Wren, with the physicist's off-hand suicide at the wheel of his Ferrari and the harbour-at-dawn farewells. The end of everything perhaps, but there is always Ava Gardner . . .

PENELOPE HOUSTON

## THE GIRL ROSEMARIE

THE RISE AND FALL of *The Girl Rosemarie* (Small Film Distributors) is one of the archetypal career stories of our time. A small-time prostitute, showing her legs as she sings on street corners, becomes a society whore in whose bed chiefs of industrial syndicates confess their loneliness. This West German film follows the line of events as they happened some years ago in Frankfurt. Rosemarie is commissioned to take down her clients' confessions on a tape-recorder; and suddenly the whole group of industrialists of the *Wirtschaftswunder* realise that they are in the hands of a slut and her French superior. She has to be murdered so that they can return home, reassured, in their black Mercedes.

*Suicide in a Ferrari. Fred Astaire in "On the Beach".*

The factual story contains a good deal of angry passion; and it also aroused the anger of the German authorities when Rolf Thiele and Erich Kuby, director and scriptwriter, used it as the basis for their film. For, as a deliberate contrast to the usual sugary brand of West German film-making, *The Girl Rosemarie* sets out to develop its headline story into a self-accusatory portrait of social decay. To move about more easily in a class-conscious world, it adopts a kind of Brechtian approach: a mixture of satire and drama, musical interludes, a real society contained within a stylised one. All this creates a whirling world of Rich and Poor, dancing to a jolly *leitmotif* on the accordion and ripe for the Last Judgment. The result is a sort of rich man's *Dreigroschenoper*, with the organ grinder playing a cool jazz motif.

This method of looking at things achieves some remarkable moments of visual exposure, an ironic view in which everything—people, emotions, cars, sounds—becomes standardised and mechanical, culminating in the dream-like final scene when, following the murder of Rosemarie, the row of luxury cars drives away from her house like a string of armoured monsters. But the observation itself never goes much deeper than reportage; and the characters (Nadja Tiller as Rosemarie, Peter Van Eyck as her French employer) are kept at that level or are openly used as symbols. The tone often recalls the simplified class-consciousness of *Mutter Krausen* or the revolving door symbol of *The Last Laugh*. Sometimes this stylisation becomes mere technique, oppressively laboured and Germanic and excessively reliant on the zoom lens shot. On the whole, though, it does manage to add up to a style; a creation of its own kind of world.

The main defect is that this ingenious method has been applied with too much conscious cleverness: the technique is there but the emotional conviction is missing. The film's underlying motive is an attack on capitalist society, on the helpless monotony of a way of living which continuously produces its Rosemaries as mechanically as the organ-grinder turns his handle. It raises all the current issues: relics of Hitlerism, poverty, loneliness, cynicism, boredom, some of them even contained in the lyrics of the musical interludes. But the lack of a total mood and attitude leaves one finally with the impression of a collection of effectively worked-out incidents and gestures, a well-shaken cocktail carrying only a slight kick rather than a hard-hitting and deliberate exposé. The film is too detached to shock, and it seems significant that the student, the only character who personifies the "voice of public good sense," is himself cold, ascetic and remote. In the end, one is left wondering whether the film's makers really intended to hit their target squarely. Without a passionate belief in its own truth, *Das Mädchen Rosemarie* cannot finally add up to more than another interesting and sometimes sensational picture, an opportunity half-taken.

ROBERT VAS





## THIS IS THE B.B.C.

THIS NEW SEVENTY-MINUTE documentary replaces John Grierson's *B.B.C. The Voice of Britain* in the Corporation's film library. Grierson's film, made in 1935, showed a B.B.C. which had only been in existence for eight years. Richard Cawston, who produced, wrote and directed *This is the B.B.C.*, has a much more complex subject to cover in a film of similar length. He uses a conventional "twenty four hours in the life of" approach, with only the clock as a continuity thread, and no commentary.

The film opens with the midnight close-down, and for a while seems a deliberate imitation of the most applauded contemporary documentaries. The camera studies exteriors; the track records natural effects, silence, scraps of half-heard dialogue. "Who's been stopping that sink up, then?" demands a cleaner. Everything is a little too dogged.

Unconnected fragments of nation-wide activity are dovetailed together with overlapping music and effects as the morning's work gets under way. Sometimes a trick comes off—girls swarming through the doors of Broadcasting House to a surge of morning music, an orchestra continuing over shots of a staff canteen. But these seem rather hit or miss successes, and another look at Grierson's film indicates their origin. It's not until news of a missing aircraft is introduced, with the B.B.C. reporter joining the search, that this production really begins to mean anything.

The centre section is much the best knit, principally because activities here are not merely glimpsed but often—as in the case of preparations for a news broadcast—sustained long enough to develop their own interest and even excitement. Towards the end the scene changes again become more fidgety; the film's appeal dwindles into fragmentary snatches, and a last-minute burst of colour, showing the B.B.C.'s current television experiments, isn't enough to recapture it.

The final impression is of a series of isolated, often very amusing moments—an Irene Handl-like doorstep interview by the audience research department, Dimbleby petulantly insisting, "But after all, it is called 'Window on the World'." Glendenning accomplishing minor miracles of commentary at Lincoln, Rudolph Cartier crying, "I've never seen such disorder" on the horse-laden set of *Mother Courage*. The quiet self-guying of several scenes (such as the Archers' scriptwriters straining to squeeze in something about hornless cattle) is as welcome as it is unexpected.

But, in the end, all the flurry is never really related to anything. Policy is hardly mentioned, executives—except for a glance at the European Service hierarchy—never shown. Nor, for that matter, are listeners or viewers: a marked contrast to Grierson's film. The real reason why it is hard to feel sympathetic towards the picture offered by *This is the B.B.C.* is that its complacency is not rooted in the value of the services the Corporation offers, but merely in the sheer size and diversity of the organisation. Instead of inviting us to admire the B.B.C. for what it does, the film wants us to exclaim in wonder that the whole thing actually works.

DEREK HILL

## In Brief

**PERSONS UNKNOWN** (*Archway*). In the past, when the Italian cinema has taken a semi-serious group of small-time crooks and used them for local dialect comedy, the result has usually been raucously and chaotically unfunny. Not so with *I Soliti Ignoti*. Characterisation and situations are predictable enough, but the film has two outstanding advantages over its predecessors: a lively script (in which the practised hand of Suso Cecchi d'Amico is clearly apparent) and a director, Mario Monicelli, who has acquired, through a series of relatively minor comedies, all the tricks of timing and presentation. This is neo-realist comedy turned inside out: all the city backgrounds are real, but the characters are an artful blend of realistic observation and inventive over-statement. The result is parody in depth, firmly rooted in an authentic contemporary setting.

Monicelli's great gift is the ability to make a simple, well-worn gag seem as funny as it did the first time. The bank robbery in the *Rifi* style is squeezed dry of every possible misfortune, from the impossibility of synchronising watches when only one of the gang in fact possesses a watch, to the sudden discovery that the wall so methodically attacked leads merely to a kitchen. This final sequence has a splendid comic inevitability; and there is something almost touching about the failure of this particular mission. The amateur



"Persons Unknown": Marcello Mastroianni and Vittorio Gassman.

crooks will never be quite the same again, for the last laugh is ours, not theirs.

The *Persons Unknown* include some of Italy's best-known character actors, here handled with unusual flexibility. Vittorio Gassman hams it up hugely, but this time in character; Mastroianni deftly sketches in a plausible glimpse of his character's home life and has some agonising moments as he waits for his injured arm to be struck during the robbery; and Memmo Carotenuto, as the snarling old lag, provides the film's one miscalculated venture into tragedy. Most expert of all is Totò's seedy professional cracksman, academically conducting a safe-breaking class on a windy rooftop with all the theoretical certainty and practical inadequacy that gives the film its particular comic tone.—JOHN GILLET

**VICIOUS CIRCLE** (*Mondial*). This film version of Jean-Paul Sartre's 1943 one act play *Huis Clos*, refused a certificate by the British Board of Film Censors in 1955, has now been passed in its complete version with an "X". It turns out to be a pleasant little comedy with almost a Shavian wit. A journalist, a lesbian post-mistress, and a young society woman who mourns her living husband because *il danse le tango comme un professionnel*, find themselves trapped in a Second Empire drawing room for eternity. They are there to torment each other, and they have plenty to torment each other about. Adultery, infanticide, lesbianism, a traffic accident, double suicide in bed, a refusal to fight for France, death before the firing squad—between themselves they certainly manage to share most of the melodramatic situations of a "well-made" play. The theatricality is intentional; for the action is a parody of a nineteenth-century play (Hell is as boring as bad theatre), and these characters, because they lack even the hope of freedom, are a parody of human beings. Ultimately, this is a comedy of logic. If—says Sartre, thus beating theologians at their own game—there must be a system of retribution in the after-life then let me, in showing you the best possible one, show you how artificial and melodramatic it would be. The concept of Hell in fact is absurd.

All this is ingenious and fascinating, but does it make a good evening out for other than linguistic philosophers? I'm not too sure. Pierre Laroche has turned the play into a film without losing any of its original quality. His best touch is to enlarge the part of a comic floor-waiter (beautifully played by Yves Deniaud) who takes us into the strange pastures of Peter Arno; less successful perhaps are some of the flashbacks. There is nothing to fault in the delicate direction of Jacqueline Audry and the acting in general is fine, with Arletty above all giving an extremely striking performance as the lesbian. But there is something missing from this film, and I suppose it's humanity. But then, this is to be expected. The dead, inevitably,



are no longer human, and one misses the muddle and inconsequentiality of human beings. The Divine Plan is all too precisely worked out. "Hell is other people," says the journalist, but that is one thing Hell is not, for Hell indeed is nothing but a linguistic possibility, an infernal metaphor that's been long played out.—ERIC RHODE

**THAT KIND OF WOMAN** (*Paramount*). Faced with the problem of whether to marry a poor but handsome young soldier (Tab Hunter) or the rich man by whom she has been kept (George Sanders), Kay (Sophia Loren) chooses love rather than comfort. This is the almost too elementary plot-line of Sidney Lumet's new feature; and the director's complaint that in the process of being recut in Hollywood his film lost the simplicity of feeling he tried to give it does not seem justified. To make this story ring true, he would have needed drastically to re-cast the action and develop his characters. Instead, he has chosen to blur the outlines of his story, overlaying it with illusions of surface reality. Obviously the result cannot be entirely successful. Yet the film has enough charm and accomplishment to make it worth enquiring how these effects have been achieved. In the first half of the film, the Miami to New York train sequence, Lumet has firmly anchored the action in the realities of war-time America. The long takes in the club-car, accompanied by snatches of popular songs, do not so much advance the plot as re-create the 1944 mood of gaiety undercut by fear. Lumet almost makes a virtue of Tab Hunter's limited range of expression by placing the emphasis here on Jack Warden, who gives a startlingly cynical portrait of a soldier making the most of civilian sentimentality. But we are not allowed entirely to forget the main situation, for each long tracking shot down the car comes to rest on the disapproving figure of Keenan Wynn, Kay's male duenna.

Throughout, Lumet cleverly builds up his illusion, using pauses, silences, small talk, even hesitations over grammar to give the feeling that these are real people evolving in time and space. All kinds of useless information and gratuitous gestures sustain the characterisation. His trump card, though, is Sophia Loren. From her he gets a sophisticatedly earthy performance of great style, combining high-level insolence with peasant warmth and boisterousness. *That Kind of Woman* cannot but remain a novelette; and, faced with the alternatives of working the material up or toning it down, Lumet has chosen the latter course. The result confirms the flexibility of a talent too subtle for the second-rate, yet, it seems, magnetically drawn to it.—RICHARD ROUD



**THE ROYAL BALLET** (*Rank*) was Paul Czinner's earliest ambition for filmed theatre. He proposed something like it, I remember, at the first demonstration of his system to Sadler's Wells officials in Wardour Street in 1953. Now he has done it more lavishly than seemed possible seven years ago.

The film's two and a quarter hours present slightly shortened versions of the second act of *Swan Lake*, *The Firebird* and Frederick Ashton's three act *Ondine*, danced by Margot Fonteyn, Michael Somes and the full company on the Royal Opera House stage.

Technically it is much better than Czinner's film of the Bolshoi in the same theatre two years earlier. Gone is the boring repetition of the few camera angles which recorded *Giselle*. Imaginative camera work more than compensates for minor faults of continuity—the firebird, for example, is made to preside, superimposed, over the marriage scene at the end of her ballet and *Ondine*'s supernatural qualities as a water-nymph are cleverly suggested. Colour quality is better, reproducing fairly accurately, if not exactly, the opulence of Lila de Nobili's decors for *Ondine* and the quieter tones of *Swan Lake* and *The Firebird*. The musical recording is truer than for the Bolshoi and the editing, also improved, makes the rhythm of the film complement and embellish the rhythm of music and choreography. Czinner, the director-technician, has done the Royal Ballet and its theatre proud.

Czinner, the producer-showman, has done the cinema less well. The nature of his system requires the most careful balance between cinema and theatre. Do the cameras create, or do they merely record? In practice they do both. But since the end is a film to be shown in a cinema, the cinema's rules and conventions must have the last word. The first of these rules, as Sam Goldwyn always pointed out, is that the story should be strong and well acted. Czinner observed this rule in *The Bolshoi Ballet* and the formula is developed here. The second act of *Swan Lake* and *The Firebird*, short ballets with good stories, precede the main piece.

They are the best things in this film, because *Ondine*, magnificent in its title role for Fonteyn and in Ashton's choreography, has an incredibly muddled, badly constructed libretto. Its tale of a water nymph, whose love destroys a mortal man, lacks dramatic power even by ballet standards. In the cinema this is death. So for cinema audiences the narrative, such as it is, needed emphasis by shortening the dances which interrupt it on stage. Czinner's loyalty to the theatre seems to have prevented this first aid treatment. By the end of two and a quarter hours, therefore, the spectacle and fine dancing from Fonteyn, Somes, Julia Farron, Alexander Grant and the rest have so submerged the story that everything becomes pointless, even tedious. Better to have saved the story by losing some dancing, than lose the audience.—PETER BRINSON

**EXPRESSO BONGO** (*British Lion/Britannia*). This story of a wide boy who discovers a beat singer prodigy sending a dozen girls in a Soho cellar, then exploits him on a 50-50 basis, might well have been a genuine musical satire on present day entertainment crazes. Some say Wolf Mankowitz's stage original was. At any rate, whatever may have been lost in the author's adaptation, it certainly isn't comprehensiveness. In the course of a two-hour, big screen pilgrimage through Paul Slickey's territory we meet an unscrupulous disc publisher, a tarnished musical comedy star who makes passes at the boy singer while he sunbathes in her penthouse, a pack of heartless gossip writers, a troupe of jaded strippers, a mad film producer left over from *Nobody Ordered Wolves*, a pre-Wolfenden prostitute (Hermione Baddeley, short-sighted for additional laughs) and Gilbert Harding as a weary TV demagogue. This, and a good deal more, whipped across the screen fast and loud, makes up a broad enough surface fantasy of show-biz corruption to confound anyone who likes his satire in focus. The period is indeterminate, the acting comes in all styles from Stratford East to Aldwych farce and the characterisation in at least one key role is incredible. Cliff Richard is a gentle, likeable performer, but it seems astonishing that anyone should confuse that authentic air of well-fed abstraction with virginal innocence and professional naïveté. Nor would any self-respecting teenager sing or applaud the kind of deliberately parodied number with which Bongo Herbert takes Shepherd's Bush by storm. This impression of over-deliberation extends to Val Guest's direction and Laurence Harvey's playing as the agent, inhibiting the one and driving the other like a steam-boiler. Even so, one can still imagine Sylvia Syms, Yolande Donlan and Wilfrid Lawson in the film one would like *Expresso Bongo* to have been; and enjoy the fierce bravura of Meier Tzelniker's "Nausea" number exactly as it stands.—PETER JOHN DYER

"That Kind of Woman".





"Our Hospitality".

## REDISCOVERY (4)

# Buster

DAVID ROBINSON

For years, Buster Keaton has been known to English audiences mainly through the two great classics in the National Film Theatre repertory—*The General* and *The Navigator*. Now the current "Hundred Clowns" season has reintroduced two long-unseen Keaton features in *Our Hospitality* (1923) and *The Cameraman* (1928). There is certainly no need to "rediscover" Keaton; but the showing of these two films affords a welcome opportunity to reassess this unique comedian.

"I WAS WALKING DOWN Broadway—down along Eighth or some place—and I met an old vaudevillian, and he was with Roscoe (Fatty) Arbuckle and he told me that he took his make-up off for a while and was going to try running a motion picture company for Joe Schenck, who was producing pictures with Norma Talmadge and Constance Talmadge at the Colony Studio on 48th Street, and that he had just signed Arbuckle from Sennett. And Roscoe asked me if I had ever been in a motion picture, and I said no I hadn't even been in a studio. And he said, well come on down to the studio Monday and do a scene with me or two and see how you like it. So I said, well, rehearsals don't start for another week or so, so I'll be down. I went down there and I worked in it. The first time I ever walked in front of a motion picture camera—that scene is in the finished motion picture [*The Butcher Boy*] and instead of doing just a bit he carried me all the way through it . . .

"So I was very interested in it—the mechanics of it . . . I wanted to know how that picture got put together through the cutting room and the mechanics of the camera which fascinated me most . . ."

\* \* \*

I THINK THAT THE critics' obsession with "the great stone face" has tended to obscure a key quality of Keaton's art. More than any of the other silent comedians, he is a great actor, by any standards you may care to apply. The myth that he is a cold, dead centre to a whirl of slapstick is simply not true. James

Agee loved Keaton and admired him; yet even he promoted the myth:

No other comedian could do so much with the dead pan. He used this great, sad motionless face to suggest various related things: a one-track mind near the track's end of pure insanity; mulish imperturbability under the wildest of circumstances; how dead a human being can get and still be alive. Everything that he was and did bore out this rigid face and played laughs against it. When he moved his eyes it was like seeing them move in a statue.

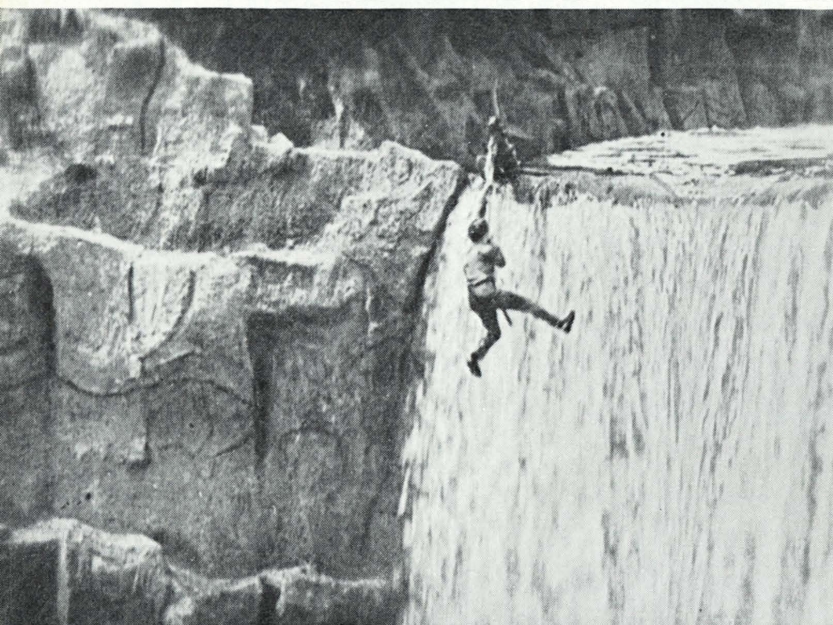
It reads well; but it underestimates the range of Keaton as actor.

Keaton follows in the exact tradition of Jean-Gaspard Debureau—"Baptiste," the great nineteenth-century pierrot. The quality they shared was a perfect restraint, a purification and stripping down of the means they commanded, until they come within sight of Gordon Craig's ideal of the über-marionette, guided by "the wires which stretch from divinity to the soul of the poet" . . . "When anyone draws a puppet on paper, he draws a stiff and comic-looking thing. Such an one . . . mistakes gravity of face and calmness of body for blank stupidity and angular deformity."

Gravity and calmness. Agee saw, despite himself, how expressive Keaton's quiet could be: "even a smile was as deafening as a yell." He is the only silent comedian with whom you are never for a moment in doubt about what he is thinking. Recognising a problem to be solved, he will slightly lower his brows, draw his chin back and slightly to one side like a bull about to charge. When he finds himself beside his girl, and she lays her head—by accident—on his shoulder, and he has to overcome the problem of where to put his arms, his passion is tremendous; and all betrayed in one prolonged, steady drooping of the great calm eyelids.

What if he does not smile? Neither did Garbo. He told an interviewer that he did not smile because he was concentrating on what he was doing, that it was unconscious, and that he was unaware of the omission until he saw the films for himself. In





any case, "I had other ways of showing I was happy." There could hardly be a more climactic celebration of joy than the scene in *The Cameraman* when the girl telephones to ask him round. Leaving the 'phone hanging, he bullets out of the house, through the New York traffic, up the steps and through the front door, to stand there as the girl is putting down the receiver, surprised that he did not say goodbye. "Am I late?" he asks shyly.

Like Debureau he acts with his whole being. He is no little mechanical man like Semon. In mute long-shot he can be more acutely expressive than most actors in talking close-up. In some of his funniest moments he is no more than a twirling spot in the distance. *The Cameraman* has a marvellously pathetic moment in long-shot, when he sinks to his knees on the lake shore, finding that the girl he had rescued has gone off with the other fellow.

*The Cameraman*, too, has a very elaborate set-up, in which a precisely operated camera lift scans the cross-section of a five-storey house. Buster is waiting for the girl to telephone. The bell rings and he hurtles downstairs, only to find the call is not for him. He climbs slowly back, up four flights of stairs, on to the roof, up the roof . . . and we understand the preoccupation with his disappointment. The 'phone rings again; this time it is for him. He hurls himself down the stairs—four flights and into the coal cellar. And this time we recognise the quite different motives of his absent-mindedness.

## 2

Keaton's acting in these comedies was entirely creative, not interpretative. He was subject to no one else's conceptions. In the days of *Our Hospitality*, *The Navigator*, *The General*, *Sherlock Junior*, he seems to have enjoyed complete autonomy.

We never had a script. We didn't work by one. We just got to talking about a story and laying out all the material that we could think of, and then got it all put together.

He was his own director. Other names—Donald Crisp, Clyde Bruckman, Edward Sedgwick, Jack Blystone—appear as co-directors with him; but the consistency of style between the films is evidence of his eventual control. Like Chaplin, Lloyd and Laurel he edited his own films; and this is what accounts for their flawless timing. It is interesting to watch Keaton developing from film to film a greater daring in the tempo of his gag cutting, until by the time of *The Cameraman* a gag will be pointed and capped in a second or two and—cut—no time to reflect before you're on to the next sequence.

In talking about the techniques of these early comedians, it is too easy to exaggerate their primitive qualities, to attribute something accidental to their artistry. In fact the best of the silent comedians were much more than mere craftsmen. At the very least, there was a dedication about them that amounted to madness. Harold Lloyd blew off half his hand and damaged his sight with a comic bomb. A Sennett cameraman was killed by a berserk comedy car ("but he was not visible in the shot, which was thrilling and undamaged; the audience never knew the difference."). Keaton himself broke his leg (making *The Electric House*), his neck (*Sherlock Jr.*), and nearly drowned himself (*Our Hospitality*). Such idiot single-mindedness could not but leave the vital stamp of personality on the films.

The special quality of Keaton's filmic personality, though, was something quite apart from the general stream. Sennett and his school consciously sought the sur-real; Keaton, by contrast, was the most realistic of the comics. It is significant that, when asked a year or so ago if he liked the Marx Brothers, he answered, "Yes, when they don't get too ridiculous." The settings which dominate his films are realistic and often very beautiful—the Brady re-creations of

"*Our Hospitality*": the usual form of a Keaton comedy, in which little annoyances (top) are followed by major problems (centre) and final triumph (below). Keaton's heroine in this film is Natalie Talmadge.



*The General*, the river scenery of *Balloonatics* and *Sherlock Junior*, the urban scenes of *The Cameraman*, the romantic countryside of *Our Hospitality*. This last film is mounted with quite exceptional care. One scene, jokingly or not, is described on the title as "from an old print." Most of the first section is an elaborate genre re-creation of the early days of steam travel, only a little coloured for comic effect.

Along with this urge to frame his comedy in naturalistic settings goes a passion for dynamic construction. It is this that has given rise to the myth that Keaton is a mechanical man, only finding true sympathy with engines. In fact it seems rather that he is simply, objectively, fascinated by the mechanical, seeing his gags as feats, or *enchaînements* of geometrical and dynamic design, for which the "Navigator," or the trains in *Our Hospitality* and *The General*, are beautiful properties. If Brunel had lived eighty years later, Keaton would no doubt have engaged him as a gagman. And very often with Keaton we are applauding not just a simple gag but the conclusion of a feat of engineering. For instance, the climax of *Our Hospitality*, where Keaton, hanging on a rope over a veritable Niagara, swings to save the girl in a feat that is a geometric as well as an acrobatic wonder.

This kind of mechanical ingenuity is not entirely new. It was first the invention of the comic strips, and had been appropriated by earlier film comics than Keaton. What gives his engineering its special flavour is that the feats he performs are not only possible (just) but they are actual. The greatest of all the *enchaînements* comes in *Sherlock Junior*, when a prolonged obstacle course, which Buster negotiates riding solo on the handle-bars of a motor cycle, ends with him catapulting feet-first through a window, slam into the chest of the villain—who is knocked clean through the opposite wall. "The whole sequence is as clean in motion as the trajectory of a bullet" (Agee). And all done by Keaton himself with no doubles, no tricks over and above the legitimate ones of editing.

### 3

Keaton was very conscious about the conception of his comic heroes, attributing his eventual failure at M-G-M to the multiplicity of writers there. "They warp your judgment in the role you're working." Unlike his comic compeers he aimed to differentiate the roles he played, and in fact regarded the consistency of the others' characters as something of a drawback. Of Chaplin he says: "He starts and stays a bum at all times. He was handicapped there. He is always a bum."

The timid little projectionist in *Sherlock Junior* is quite another person from the foolhardy, self-assured youth in *Our Hospitality* or the cool millionaire of *The Navigator*; and the love-sick engineer of *The General*, or the rather less self-possessed but equally love-lorn aspirant in *The Cameraman*, are different again. But all the heroes possess certain common qualities. In the first place they are not unduly bullied and down-trodden, like Chaplin; or retarded, like Langdon; or plain gormless, like Lloyd. They all have fair endowments of means, of looks (Keaton never has any special problems in capturing and holding the girl's affections) and of intelligence. Their resourcefulness seems a bit above average.

The Keaton hero is always placed in exceptional circumstances or faced with some exceptional problem—a rebel army (*The General*), a drifting liner (*The Navigator*), a family feud (*Our Hospitality*), or simply his own nightmares (*Sherlock Junior*) or ambitions (*The Cameraman*). But he is always extended by adversity: practical problems stimulate him, and he deploys his reserves of resourcefulness to equal fate and to overtake it. The news cameraman, caught in a Chinatown riot, is not content to use his ingenuity to save himself: he bursts electric light bulbs to lure the battle within range of his lens; and when he finds two Chinese in a deathly clinch, he slips a

knife into one clutching hand to improve the picture. Rollo's ingenuity in adapting the "Navigator" to a life *à deux* excels Robinson Crusoe.

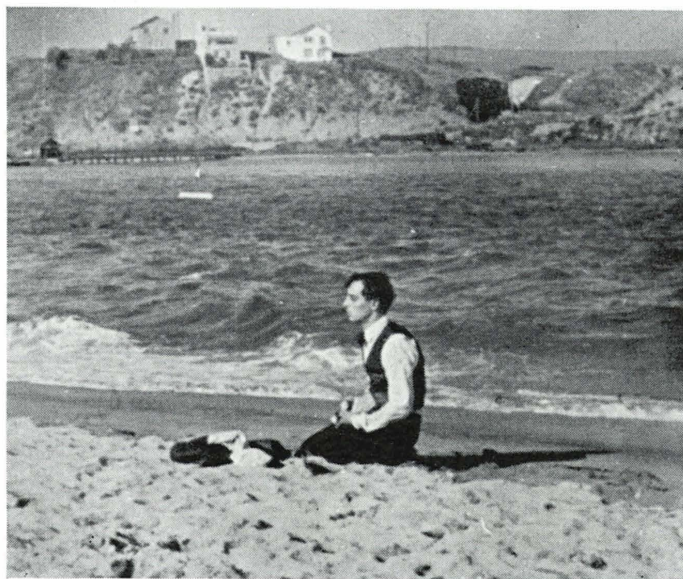
It must be admitted that the Keaton hero has rather more than his share of ill luck as well as good. Wherever there's a hostile army, or cannibals, or thuggee, or assassins, he's sure to run into them. It seems bad luck, too, that if he decides on a quiet day's fishing (*Our Hospitality*), he chooses the very spot where they are about to burst a dam. So what? Hasn't he his umbrella?

This handy, if not very effectual, umbrella I take as a symbol of the essential optimism of the Keaton films. Agee found a "freezing whisper" of melancholy about them; but I feel that this is just a matter of subsequent association. A certain quality of melancholy is inevitable to old films, with their reminders of time and youth passed by. More has gathered about these comedies with the knowledge of Keaton's own later life—his constant attempts to re-establish himself in films; the endless artistic humiliations he has received at the hands of Hollywood. But the films themselves are quite pure of sentiment and pathos. Their heroes always triumph, overcome their adversaries and end up in the arms of their girls. It is all-out victory, not just a triumph of the spirit: Keaton is no Chaplin to flip a sadly defiant cigarette butt and off up the endless road to the next load of cuffs and kicks. Keaton *really* wins; and you can imagine him happy ever after, puzzled perhaps by an overlarge brood and a perambulator which gets wilful from time to time . . .

When Hollywood decided to pay tribute to Keaton in a screen biography, they restaged a few of his old gags (not so well, I'm afraid, as he had staged them many years before) and portrayed him, in his private person, as a wastrel, a melancholic and a drunkard. All of which, of course, he may have been, just as he was once a low vaudeville comedian, just as he has spent thirty years unable to regain a place in a cinema which has forgotten art as refined as his.

But he is still, whether he knows or likes it or not, a sort of poet; and as a poet, in the end the deeper secrets of his charm and humour will elude us. One recalls the self-mystification of another artist who shared the same kind of calm and stillness and purity, Eleanora Duse. "To watch a beautiful garden in its blossoming is a great joy, but I am not interested in the way the blossoms are produced. I came from far away and have faith in my star. That is all. I can say no more, nor do I wish to know more."

Quotations from Buster Keaton are taken from interviews with Christopher Bishop (*Film Quarterly*, Fall 1958) and John Schmitz (*Cahiers du Cinéma*, August 1958).



"The Cameraman": Keaton "sinks to his knees on the lake shore, finding that the girl he had rescued has gone off with the other fellow."



# Putting it on film

PHILIP PURSER



"Dragnet": Jack Webb and Ben Alexander.

In a typical week last November, filmed series, both British and American, took up just on eighteen hours of television time. The BBC had eleven (six Westerns, five others); ITV in London had twenty-three (eight Westerns, fifteen others). Wagon Train, The Third Man, The Deputy, Highway Patrol . . . the episodes come pouring out each week, and the supply of this material for television has become an industry. In this article, a television critic considers some recent developments.

EXACTLY WHO IT WAS THAT decided a television film would be more profitable than the equivalent amount of live television is uncertain. The pioneer venture seems to have been a legalistic crime series called *The Public Prosecutor*. Anyway, it happened—in America, of course—and if you look back on the early days of television as a kind of Garden of Eden, this was the Fall. By the 1955–56 season the proportion of filmed to live material on the American networks was 40:60 and rising fast.

The reasoning was simple enough. A live show disappeared into thin air like a puff of smoke, gone forever; one on film could be kept, used over and over again, bought and sold. The word "property" began to replace the word "production." Then again, American advertisers did not always want the

national advertising coverage which sponsorship of a live show on the expanding networks involved. The aim was sometimes to sell intensively in one area, and the filmed programme which could be syndicated among local stations was the answer. The half-hour form and the insistence on series rather than what Americans call one-shows were a legacy from commercial radio. Otherwise the new form had almost nothing in common with live television. It was as if the medium had diverged into two quite separate streams: live television clung to the practices and traditions of broadcasting, with New York as its capital; the television film moved physically and spiritually to Hollywood, control passing from the broadcasting networks to independent entrepreneurs.

Today (November, 1959) the *Hollywood Reporter* lists two-and-a-half TV series in production for every feature film; and no series is a series at all under 39 episodes. Some reach 250. Then there are repeats. It has been calculated that the five years *Robin Hood* was in production were enough to endow it with a sort of immortality: every five years you can start screening it all over again to a fresh wave of children. The ninth rights, I think they were, of *I Love Lucy* changed hands the other day.

In the face of such overwhelming, all-engulfing quantity, any qualitative survey is bound to seem a bit like sampling Thames water with a pipette. Besides, the technical shortcomings of the television film hardly need elaborating. Compared with the feature film it is a conveyor-belt product, cheap and hurried. A 30-minute episode can be turned out in two-and-a-half days, and Henry Fonda is the only man who has ever deluded himself into believing that the result is even up to a C-picture. (He should take a closer look at some of the cutting between exteriors and studio shots in his own sad investment *The Deputy*.)

All the same, there are some important larger questions. After ten years of this sort of television film, has there been any noticeable improvement? What direction are they moving in, and to whom are they trying to appeal? What are the prescribed values, remembering that this is the industry which has taken consumer research more seriously than any other mass medium? The answers are to some extent implicit in the broad trends and fashions in television filming which move across the American scene and a little later, telescoped and damped-down, reach our own shores.

2

Before the start of commercial television few TV films had been seen in Britain: *Fabian of the Yard*, Douglas Fairbanks Presents, not much else. The latter series, made locally by Fairbanks for the American market, was tried out round the cinema circuits, two or three episodes strung together to make a second feature. It had interest value as a foretaste of commercial television and five years later it still crops up on some stations, last survivor of an almost extinct trend, the Anthology Series. As the name suggests, the Anthology Series has no fixed milieu or characters: continuity is dependent on a regular host (Fairbanks, Flynn, Hitchcock) or persistent theme (the weird tales of *Inner Sanctum*).

September, 1955, brought what was probably the best Anthology job, *Four Star Theatre*, which rotated the talents of Ida Lupino, Charles Boyer, David Niven and Dick Powell. It also brought the situation comedies (*Lucy*, *I Married Joan*, *The Adventures of Aggie*), now equally obsolescent. And it brought the first of the police documentaries, *Dragnet*.

The history of *Dragnet* is important. It had run two years on radio before being started additionally on television; its producer and star, Jack Webb, was a radio man, though he immersed himself quickly in film techniques. *Dragnet* was alert to adopt storyboarding, the trick whereby a whole batch of TV films is pre-planned as a single production and all the scenes in, say, a hotel room are shot at one time. The locale was Los Angeles ("This is the City"); every episode began with a panoramic survey of its featureless landscape, every



scene was prefaced by the bald announcement of time and place. Very little actual detection went on; half the leads fizzled out abortively; there was scarcely any action and less violence. The essence of the programme was interrogation—nearly always effective on TV.

Absent, too, was any attempt to fill in the private lives of the two policemen, Friday (Webb) and Smith (Ben Alexander). Their dialogue was flat and weary and to the point. But vivid, if fleeting, characterisation was lavished on the parade of suspects, witnesses and culprits. The ageing, long-forgotten bit-player picked up for some sad felony sifted through her box of photographs: "This is the one I was keeping for the Press." If storyboarding ever confused the actor called to the studios to complete a part begun weeks before, it didn't show among *Dragnet's* Hollywood Stanislavskians.

The series soon had imitators: *Lineup* (set in San Francisco), *M-Squad* (Chicago), *Highway Patrol*. While *Dragnet* had managed without violence and had only occasionally dealt in murder, however, the newcomers relied heavily on both. *Lineup* might have been called *Beatup*. Whereas the policemen in *Dragnet* had been impersonal agents of the Police Department, the individual police-hero now became more important, epitomised by *Highway Patrol's* sagging heavyweight Dan Matthews (Broderick Crawford).

The trend was towards violence and hero-worship, and it continues today. It is displayed with text-book clarity, in fact, in *Interpol Calling*, a belated attempt at the police documentary by the Rank Organisation. The original intention was to dramatise the work of Interpol as an international organisation. The series has appeared very much as a starring vehicle for Charles Korvin, playing the ubiquitous Inspector Duval. In an episode concerning heroin smuggling from Istanbul, one villain is gratuitously toppled off a high roof to crash to his death below. The original script does not contain this incident.

The experience of *Dragnet* and its successors and emulators suggests a first sad truth about television film-making: that any successful formula will be imitated and at the same time corrupted.

### 3

The Western, next main fashion to emerge, is really a study in itself. There had been Westerns of a childish brand on TV for a long time (*Lone Ranger*, *Cisco Kid*), but *Gunlaw* (*Gunsmoke* in the U.S.) was the first of the so-claimed adult kind. Initially, it seemed to justify the tag. The Marshall (James Arness) was a lonely and sometimes fallible figure; his opponents echoed, however faintly, the disillusion of Jimmy Ringo.

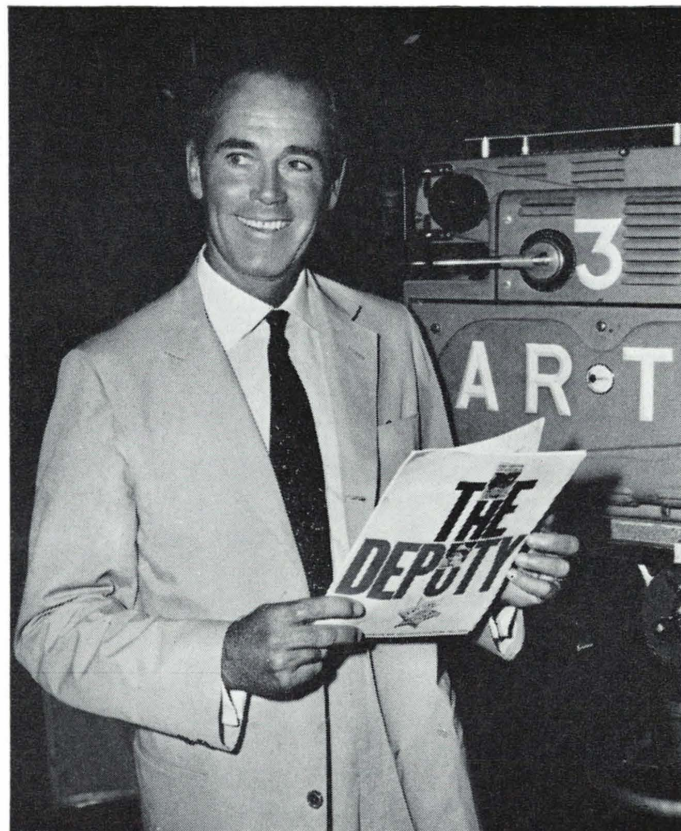
It couldn't last, of course, and didn't. The sheer rate of output was enough to guarantee that, there being only a limited number of plausible variations on any theme. And already *Wyatt Earp* was on the scene, with its romantic ballad-enshrined hero played by an actor (Hugh O'Brian) who later visited London in gold lamé trimmings and diamanté boots to star in a Wild West pantomime. On his heels (rubber, surprisingly) pressed a crowd of new heroes, including a sinister brand not of the law but above it, lone arbiters of right and wrong: Paladin in *Have Gun, Will Travel*; Bronco Lane in *Bronco*. Meanwhile the mounting demand for stories pressed writers into ever more intricate permutations of motives and morals. It is O.K. for the gunman to shoot down those equally proficient with a gun, but not those less expert (*Have Gun, Will Travel*); the preacher's son is a gunman but it's not his fault—the old man turned him out of the home (*Bronco*); the gentle musician is a killer of law officers because his daughter was struck down by a law officer's stray bullet (*The Deputy*).

The hour-long film, an innovation accompanying the Western fashion, brought some respite. Obviously it permits more spaciousness in every sense, certainly deeper characterisa-

tion. *Wagon Train*, while retaining a strong element of hero-worship (Robert Horton, Ward Bond), habitually dispenses what are simple social dramas transferred from the community of street or parish to that of the Wagon Train. But after three seasons they begin to be repetitive and silly. A quaint maritime episode inserted to take Horton and Bond back from California to the start of a new trek in the East achieved about the standard of verisimilitude of *Song of Sheherezade*. The lesson of the Western is the second sad truth about TV films: that quantity will always engulf any initial quality.

The Western is now reported, perhaps prematurely, to be on the way out; and if it is displaced it is likely to be by a fashion said to have a good deal in common with it. This is the Jazzbeat Private Eye series. Cowboys in Brooks Brothers suits, its protagonists have been called, and the crack is a valid one. Like the later-model Western heroes they are mostly lone operators, by instinct on the side of right. They don't need quite the same dedication, they can even affect commercial motives; and they are, of course, more articulate. They can kid along in the confidential, laconic style of the *Daily Express's* New York diary. "For ten minutes she'd been looking at me like we were in and they were out, whoever they were." Thus Johnny Staccato (John Cassavetes), setting another *Staccato* episode in motion from his customary starting-point at a night club piano.

*Peter Gunn*, unseen in Britain, was the trail-blazer. *Staccato*, which is here, is reckoned to be a fairly close copy. Departing from the original pattern in a rather disturbing way—and at twice the length—is *77 Sunset Strip*, which is visible in most ITV areas outside London. No one would claim *Staccato* to be anything more than toughie fiction to good music, but it does have a production style which seems to derive from television as much as from the movies—an airliner sequence, maybe, gaining its sensations of flight and take-off and landing within the passenger cabin rather than from stock aeroplane shots. It has wit and New York worldliness: it is all of a piece. *Sunset Strip*, however, gives the impression of being carefully assembled from chosen elements. It keeps the private



Henry Fonda: a new Western series is launched.



eye (Efraim Zimbalist), the jazz, the toughness. It adds two assistant eyes, and it is one of these, Kookie, who disturbs me.

Kookie is a teenager with a coiffeured forelock which he combs as a trademark. He runs a hot-rod and talks a kind of shallow beat-talk (the setting is California). Things are cool, his employer is Dad. His wit has an engineered precision: "Welcome to the last act of Hamlet," he greets the police after knocking out a roomful of crooks. He is also, underneath all this, an all-American boy who likes nice American girls. Kookie couldn't have been created more specifically to appeal to teenagers and at the same time appease their mothers.

American television producers have always professed to know their audience—not the audience of their own Connecticut or California environment, but the real beetle-browed Mid-Western audience, the legendary Milwaukee truck-driver. American writers, scarcely concealing their disdain of television, have broken down the task of writing for it into tangible commodities: they know how to deploy envy-images (playboys, go-ahead executives, English milords) and identification images (people like us). Coupled with the pressure and haste and economy of production, these attitudes explain a lot about the TV film. But they don't explain why in general scope, literacy and breadth of vision it should have lagged so far behind the cinema film. Were not exceptional movies turned out on low budgets? Were not the writers just as unhappy writing them? Did not the Milwaukee truck-driver go to the pictures before he bought his TV set? Perhaps the third sad truth of television filming is that no one has dared to test these questions. Much seems to me to depend on the next trend. If it carries on from *Staccato*, there is hope; if *Sunset Strip* wins the day, it means that after ten years the TV film is just about at the level of Andy Hardy.

4

Production of British TV series is dependent, and always has been, on American needs; no British series has ever been made with British tastes primarily in mind. The hard facts are



that a half-hour film costs about £10,000 to make and that only £3,000 can apparently be recovered at home, even from a full network showing. The result has been a dispiriting procession of curiosities, mostly mid-Atlantic, some (like *O.S.S.*) wholly American, made largely for the American market and in imitation of American trends. *Dial 999*, for instance, an inferior Scotland Yard subject in which every episode had to end with a chase, was officially described as Britain's answer to *Highway Patrol*.

The sole school of British production to have any discernible identity was the costume frolic, established by *Robin Hood* as a reasonable enough entertainment for 12-year-olds. Trailing in its wake came *Ivanhoe*, *Sir Lancelot*, *William Tell* and *Sword of Freedom*, a Renaissance hotch-potch which solemnly reproduced the spirit of Max Beerbohm's famous scene direction to a Florentine drama. "Leonardo," a character would remark, "Have you seen Michelangelo?" "Sure, I passed him on the Rialto with Benvenuto."

There remains a barren zone from which such unclassifiable products as *The Invisible Man*, *The Third Man* and *The Four Just Men* are turned out. These have nothing in common except a total lack of character, distinction and point, and the coincidence that all three have titles legally pirated from established books or films. *The Invisible Man* conducts anti-espionage activities on the level of the *Wizard* comic; the new Harry Lime is an enigmatic, gutless shadow of the old; the *Four Just Men* go about their improbable exploits with a curiously dated air which must be Edgar Wallace having his revenge. Taken together, they raise the gravest doubts about the grasp of British producers.

If the American aim is uncertain, what is the British? To whom are they proposing to appeal, and where is the audience that lapped up the jolly joustings of *Sir Lancelot* and will also lap up the riddles of *The Third Man*? Is there no room between these extremes of silliness for a TV series on the respectable level of an ordinary TV play? Is there no aspect of British life other than crime that can be exported, no institution other than Scotland Yard?

One answer would be that the Anthology series tried to do just this and failed to survive. Douglas Fairbanks even included some superficial social realism now and then, and another series, Harry Alan Towers' *Theatre Royal*, pressed a story by D. H. Lawrence to use. But these were half-hours and the half-hour accommodates no more than anecdote; the advent of the one-hour format should at least reopen the possibility.

I have left to the end the question of any aesthetic difference between live and filmed television, mainly because I don't think it matters very much. The old see-it-happen-as-it-happens mystique is rather forgotten nowadays; one of the most popular *film* shows in America is of golf matches. The divergence between filmed and live TV was chiefly an industrial one. But it is generally accepted that the sustained live performance is more of a performance than the assembled film one, and I would add another point: that everyone connected with a live show must obviously feel a direct responsibility for it which is missing in the production of batches of films to be shown at some unspecified future date.

The wholesale adoption of Ampex recording is now producing a species of television which lies somewhere between live and filmed. Indeed the Ampexed TV series like *Skyport* and *No Hiding Place* are already taking over some of the functions of the TV film. Although there are enormous technical troubles in the international exchange of video-tape, it begins to look as if the two kinds of television will one day converge again. If the television film gets lost in the process I don't expect to be sorry.

"*The Third Man*": "... the new Harry Lime is an enigmatic, gutless shadow of the old."



# Book Reviews

**THE JAPANESE FILM: art and industry.** By Joseph L. Anderson and Donald Richie. Illustrated. (Charles E. Tuttle Co., Rutland, Vermont, and Tokyo. \$7.50.)

ANDERSON AND RICHIE ARE familiar names to readers of *SIGHT AND SOUND* through their contributions on the Japanese cinema. Now they have performed the formidable task of tracing the history of the Japanese cinema and evaluating its achievement—a particularly exacting challenge in a country which is only now contemplating the formation of an official film archive, and has hitherto depended on the enthusiasm of private individuals within its industry for any continuous record.

The book's first section deals with the growth of the industry and the development of the main genres of Japanese films. A close, frank look is taken at the business machinations. All large-scale capitalist film industries must have a colourful behind-the-scenes history of piracy, but surely that of Japan can have no equal as a battleground. In the early days, highly individual commentaries were given to silent films by the *benshi*, whose fame equalled and occasionally surpassed that of the leading actors. The fierce rearguard action fought by them against the use of sound and sub-titles considerably delayed the development of the talkies in Japan. The main film companies (now there are six) soared time and again to seemingly impregnable positions of power; and plunged as dramatically to near-liquidation through strikes, internal disputes between artists and managerial chiefs, or simply through an unimaginative conservatism in their policies.

Again and again one is struck by the determination of the artists in their ceaseless war with mediocre intentions. Where else, one wonders, would a crew, determined to fly in the face of the studio's rejection of an experimental film (*Earth*, 1939), have purloined raw stock from other current productions, slipping it secretly to a clandestine unit, while the director, also engaged on routine chores in Tokyo, scurried backwards and forwards between there and the location. Finally confronted with the finished film, the studio reluctantly released it, when it was acclaimed as the film of the year.

In this often chaotic state of the industry (the authors describe it as "the most conservative, artistically reactionary, inefficient and unprofessional industry in the world"), the catalogue of its best achievements becomes doubly impressive. Dozens of outstanding key-works have been made, which only a monumental effort by an organisation such as the National Film Theatre or the Cinémathèque Française will ever afford us the chance of seeing. There are the left-wing "tendency" films of the early 1930's and the products of the neo-realistic movement pioneered by Yasujiro Shimazu and Goshō (actually known by this title in Japan even in the 'thirties); the revolutionary injection of poetic realism which Sadao Yamanaka and Mansaku Itami gave the fossilised period film of the late 1930's; and the quality of many of the war films, which Capra is reported to have judged as far beyond Hollywood's capacity consistently to equal. In lighter vein, how intriguing it would be to see the wave of flagrantly erotic post-war films, boasting such titles as *A Virgin's Sex Manual*, *Bitch*, *Confessions of a Gynaecologist* or *Male Virgin*. And these from a nation which, a few years earlier, after conscientiously cutting out all kissing scenes from imported films, had daringly exhibited the first native kiss; over which, at the crucial moment, a parasol was coyly lowered.

It is encouraging to learn that something genuinely progressive emerged out of Japan's ruthlessly expansionist policy of the 'thirties. In many lands, and in particular Indonesia and Korea, instruction in film-making, given as part of an official policy of propaganda through co-productions, fell on richly receptive ground. The result was a great forward stride in the industries of these countries.

In their account of the cinema's development, the authors generally include a short synopsis of each film's plot; a practice



"A Night at the Opera": Groucho and Margaret Dumont.

which tends to become wearisome, particularly in cases where no precise social or historical point is involved. Occasionally their judgments seem disappointingly vague. A statement such as the following, on Kurosawa's *Living*, could surely have been expanded with more precision: "The film's fault is perhaps that Kurosawa's genius flows unchecked and that sometimes he carries things too far."

Nevertheless, the work as a whole is of compelling interest, and the latter section on the nine leading Japanese directors is a perceptive summary of their qualities. It is good to learn that, despite the pressures of an almost feudal system (an assistant automatically becomes a director after serving his apprenticeship, whether or not he shows talent, and is then allotted his chores often with no warning, and within an utterly rigid time schedule), the leading talents still command a more or less free hand. They are able to assume full responsibility for their work, with no intervening producer to keep a controlling watch on behalf of the front office. They even generally manage to evade the stultifying policy by which each studio's product is angled to the taste of a certain section of the public: Daiei for the teenagers, Toho for the urban workers, etc.

The book is copiously illustrated with a fine collection of stills, from the earliest film in 1898 to the present day. Altogether its authors have performed a unique service—not only to us in the West but to the Japanese themselves, who tend in the main to hold the achievements of their astonishing cinema in evanescent, if not downright perfunctory, esteem.

DEREK PROUSE

**GROUCHO AND ME, by Groucho Marx. Illustrated. (Gollancz, 21s.)**

"GROUCHO TELLS," SAID A NEWSPAPER PLACARD advertising the serialisation of Groucho Marx's autobiography. On reflection, this was an overstatement. The protesting editor who is quoted on page 209 of this sensationally unrevelatory work—"Look, up to now you've written 80,000 words . . . and your readers still don't know a damned thing about you"—speaks with the perception of despair. The note of ghastly banter that is Groucho's style is often very funny, sometimes plain ghastly, but never, to put it mildly, enlightening.

Thinking to spike your guns, he affirms at the end of the first chapter that "what you're getting here is pure ersatz Groucho . . . I suppose one could write a factual, honest and truthful autobiography, but to play it safe it would have to be published posthumously . . . what good would a posthumous book do me?" Like a housewife teasing an election canvasser, he leans against the front door and hisses gay insults through the crack. "All right, I'll



tell you who I'm *not* going to vote for! The public! the critics! But just you try to guess who I'm in *favour* of!"

The Marx Brothers, of whom Groucho, *né* Julius, was the middle of the five, were born on the Upper East Side of New York. Their father was a tailor who engagingly refused the aid of a tape-measure, believing that this instrument might be all right for an undertaker, but not for a tailor who had the unerring eye of an eagle. Their mother, child of a German ventriloquist and a yodelling harpist, had inappropriate dramatic yearnings to which she once gave vent by joining her sons in vaudeville. For four years they had been earning two hundred dollars a week as an act called The Four Nightingales (so titled, apparently, because they were dressed as yachtsmen). Four people, two hundred dollars; six people, three hundred dollars, figured mom. So she and Aunt Hannah joined the act as Two Little Girls in Blue, bringing the nightingale total up to six for a single cataclysmic evening that ended with the Two Little Girls falling through a chair, at which they had misfired because they were not wearing spectacles.

The chapter called "Inside Hollywood" (twelve pages) is the kernel of the book. For the sake of consistency, it tells absolutely nothing about the way the Marx Brothers made their films. But it enshrines a just tribute to Irving Thalberg (who persuaded them into using plots, and produced the two films that Groucho recognises as their best—*A Night at the Opera* and *A Day at the Races*); and the exposition of the Hollywood system that follows is vintage Groucho, cold-eyed and hilariously funny. It holds some brisk studies of successful directors and producers, including a mogul here identified as Delaney. (Groucho calls most of his characters Delaney, to save confusion.) This Delaney was playing croquet for pretty high stakes when one of his guests bravely suggested that he was going for the wrong wicket. "Whatsamatter?" said Delaney, shaking a menacing mallet. "You for Stevenson or something?"—which, as Groucho points out, clearly implies that Delaney felt he had detected a Communist.

"Not all the movie people in this chapter need to be nameless," Groucho goes on to admit. "There were the Delaney brothers, for instance, whom I will call Warner for the sake of brevity." From this ensues a maniac correspondence between Groucho and Warner Brothers (whom he addresses indifferently as Dear Warner Brothers, Dear Warners or Dear Brothers), about the title of *A Night in Casablanca*, Warner Brothers holding that this infringed their own *Casablanca*. "You claim you own *Casablanca*," wrote Groucho patiently, "and that no one else can use that name without your permission. What about Warner Brothers? . . . You probably have the right to use the name Warner but what about Brothers? Professionally, we were brothers long before you were . . . and even before us there had been other brothers—the Smith Brothers; the Brothers Karamazov; Dan Brothers, an outfielder with Detroit, and 'Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?' This was originally, 'Brothers, Can You Spare a Dime?' but this was spreading a dime pretty thin, so they threw out one brother, gave all the money to the other brother and whittled it down to 'Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?'"

The chapter ends with Groucho's rationalisation of the end of his film career. It was the last evening of shooting on *A Night in Casablanca*. At 1 a.m. he was swaying on a ladder with a wind machine blowing at him, and "As I hung there like a plucked turkey, I said to myself, Groucho, old boy—and believe me, you *are* an old boy—don't you think this is rather a ridiculous way for you to be spending your remaining years?"

From then on, though the skittish note is resumed, the heart has gone out of it. With the last and genuinely saddening chapter—for if one has any clear picture of Groucho by the end, it is of a nervily affectionate man who is terrified of old age and who has been dogged all his life by the thought of being left in poverty—he records his appreciation of the wonderful TV programme that has provided him with his livelihood for the last eleven years, a quiz show called "You Bet Your Life." It's not just another quiz show, you see. One is left feeling rather unhappy.

PENELOPE GILLIATT

### ALEXANDER KORDA, by Paul Tabori. Illustrated. (Oldbourne, 25s.)

ANY BIOGRAPHY WRITTEN within a few years of its subject's death is likely to be deficient in intimate detail. Mr. Tabori, a fellow-Hungarian and ex-employee of Korda's, asserts that he has suppressed nothing; but one may legitimately wonder whether he knew anything worth suppressing. It is notable that the long list of acknowledgments in his "Author's Note" does not include any member of Korda's immediate family. In these circumstances, his

portrayal of the essential man is almost bound to be a superficial one. He has interviewed an impressive list of film personalities, all of whom praise the charm and talent of "Alex" in the usual somewhat fulsome manner. They also tell some very entertaining anecdotes. But none of them is able to capture successfully the elusive personal magnetism of the farm bailiff's son who became a leading film-maker in two continents. And one or two of the anecdotes have the all too familiar touch of conscious extravagance and eccentricity which we used to associate with Hollywood in its heyday.

If he has failed to portray the man, how does Mr. Tabori deal with the artist? He supplies a catalogue of films but does not commit himself to any real critical opinions, being content as a rule with quoting a line or two of Press comment and stating whether or not each film was a financial success. Actually it is in the more practical realm of finance that he seems most at home. He gives a detailed account of Korda's relations with British Lion and several American companies and closely surveys the varying fortunes of London Films. He does not, however, altogether prove his thesis that Korda was only reluctantly involved in the big business machinery of his companies and would have preferred to give more time to the creative side. As Tabori's own excellent filmography shows, Korda personally directed only ten of the hundred films with which he was associated during his quarter-century of work in England. The extent of his influence as impresario on the remaining ninety will provide an interesting problem for some future historian seeking to evaluate Korda's contribution to our cinema. In spite of its lack of critical content and rather pedestrian style, Mr. Tabori's factual account of Korda's career should give such a historian a useful starting point; but he will need to keep a wary eye on some careless spelling errors.

BRENDA DAVIES

### FILM AND TELEVISION IN EDUCATION FOR TEACHING, a report of a joint working party of the B.F.I. and the A.T.C.D.E. (Available from the British Film Institute, 2s. 6d.)

WHEN JAMES STEWART WAS interviewed after his recent appointment to the Board of Trustees of Princeton University, he said that an academic education would be useful for someone wanting a career in films, even someone like Jayne Mansfield. A number of us have thought for years that it would be useful for academic education to study, say, the acting of James Stewart (or even Jayne Mansfield) and the work of their directors. Attempts are made in school to recruit new generations of enthusiasts for the arts, and the minority grows. They would benefit enormously by recognising that the contemporary arts, especially cinema, which children already like, should have equal standing with the traditional arts, of which many children are fiercely suspicious. Education, as all teachers know, must be based on experience, or made relevant to it. Liberal education, in ethical and aesthetic values, in social understanding and criticism, could wish for no better starting point than the film at the local, or even last night's television programmes.

These assumptions are unexceptionable to readers of SIGHT AND SOUND, no doubt. They are still remote from educational practice, but the pioneering stage (for which the British Film Institute and the Society for Education in Film and Television are mainly responsible) is over. This report marks a major advance, not only in the status of film, but in the progress of education. It is, in fact, a document of historic significance, which has moved far beyond the generalities of my introductory sentences, and produced practical proposals designed to alter teacher training so that every teacher has some knowledge of cinema, and so that training colleges can use the extra year partly to send out specialists in film and television. It was not written by a group of cineastes lobbying, like scores of other groups, to have their obsession built into teacher training; it is the unanimous statement of a joint Working Party set up by the B.F.I. and the Association of Teachers in Colleges and Departments of Education. They see that the study of film and television should not be just an extra subject crammed into an overfull curriculum; it is a discipline which, because of the range of its subject matter and because of the techniques of analysis and discrimination which it requires, can integrate other disparate aspects of the time-table.

The Report contains four major proposals for Training Colleges: a main course in Film; a general course as an optional section of a specialist course in English or Art, or as a section in an obligatory course, e.g. Education; a curriculum course lasting one year; and the more deliberate use of Training College Film Societies. The



Working Party is aware of the dangers: they do not want enthusiasm for film to be killed by the dead hand which has afflicted some "set books" teaching of literature. There are specimen discussions and even examination questions based on, for example, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, *Room at the Top* and *Hancock's Half-Hour*. There are also refreshing warnings: "Serious film should not be equated with the ponderous, uninspired film on a weighty subject. Nor should it be identified with straight drama or the literary adaptation. *Singin' in the Rain*, *My Darling Clementine* and *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* . . . are all pieces of serious film-making, in a way that *A Tale of Two Cities* and *The Ten Commandments* are not." As well as details of training schemes and examples of treatment, there are useful appendices listing books, films, organisations and B.F.I. services.

One adverse criticism: it is a great pity that such an important report should bear the stamp of committee gestation. Someone should have taken firmer editorial control to make it more coherent, more incisive and better ordered.

BRIAN GROOMBRIDGE

**FILM: BOOK 1**, edited by Robert Hughes. Illustrated. (Grove Press, New York; John Calder, London. 10s. 6d.)

"FILM: BOOK 1 (the first of what we hope will be an annual series) is concerned with the audience and the film-maker's relation to it," declares Robert Hughes in his introduction; but it isn't. Many of the contributions originate from other sources, with few points of contact between them, and an attempt at shaping the book by dividing it into six sections with two articles per section proves unsatisfactory. The headings give some idea of the general vagueness: The Audience; The Situation of the Serious Film-maker; Flaherty's Way; The Process of Film-making; Two Unproduced Films; Perspectives on Progress.

The book opens with an extract from Siegfried Kracauer's forthcoming work on film theory, investigating the psychological

effects of the cinema on the spectator. The conclusion makes the extract a strange choice: "Here the momentous issue of the significance of film experience arises. But here this essay ends." Arthur Knight's survey of American art houses and film societies has one or two surprises (*Love in the Afternoon* and *The Happy Road* had art house premieres) and an unnecessary disdain towards those who "dignify with the title 'film society' a passion for old Garbos, Barrymores and W. C. Fields" and the endearingly labelled Foofs (Friends of old films) who won't look at anything made after 1928. The best item is George Stoney's moving account of his research work for *All My Babies*, his study of Negro midwives in Georgia. Gideon Bachmann's interview with Fellini is mildly rewarding; and Zavattini's story of his unrealised project *Italia Mia*, attempting a sympathetic portrait of representative Italian life, contains several fascinating examples of his approach, particularly of his belief in minimal advance scripting of factual subjects.

An unenterprising questionnaire to eleven film-makers provides a set of predictable responses. "Who Cut the Comedy?", a sixteen-page cartoon, occupies at least sixteen times the space it deserves; and the final batch of stills, each chosen from a contributor's film to illustrate a line in his article, strains to add a much-needed something. A meatier compilation was needed to match *Film: Book 1*'s honest, welcome intentions: the impression here is of an oversized but undernourished magazine.

DEREK HILL

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

ADMINISTERING AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES. By Carlton W. H. Erickson. (Macmillan, New York, 48s. 6d.)

DICTIONARY OF CINEMATOGRAPHY AND SOUND RECORDING. By Wallace S. Sharps. (Fountain Press, 15s. 6d.)

HAPPY GO LUCKY. By Kenneth More. (Robert Hale, 18s.)

INTERNATIONAL FILM ANNUAL, No. 3. Edited by William Whitebait. (John Calder, 25s.)

MAKING 8MM. MOVIES. By Philip Grosset. (Fountain Press, 35s.)

THE ST. TRINIAN'S STORY. Edited by Kaye Webb. (Perpetua, 21s.)

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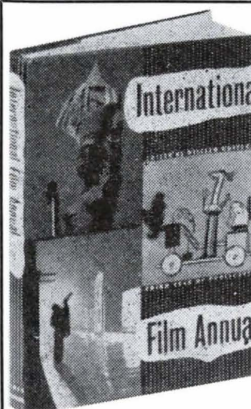
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## GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

DAVID ROBINSON writes: When you speak to cineastes abroad about the early days of the cinema, they are sure to talk with reverence of our Mr. Smith, one of the great ones of the Brighton School. In his own country, however, he is perhaps the least known of the pioneers; and his death, on May 17th, 1959, was not even noticed in the press. Yet amidst all the academic fogs of who invented what and when, the achievements of George Albert Smith stand out bright and clear.

He was born in 1864, and was working as a portrait photographer in Brighton when he began to interest himself in the cinema, in 1896. He devised his own movie-camera; and on April 13th, 1897, confirmed himself in the producing business by selling his first picture. A little black cash-book preserved in the National Film Archive records the growth of his business over the next three years. It also budgets his famous one-minute comedy, *The Miller and the Sweep* (1898), with its artists' salaries of ten shillings. In 1900 he went into business with Charles Urban's Warwick Trading Company and built one of the first studios in the world, at St. Anne's Well Garden, Brighton.

His inventiveness in the use of his medium was prodigious. He patented the method of double-exposure and *The Corsican Brothers* (1897) was probably the first film to use the technique. *Grandma's Reading Glass* (1900) made the first use of interpolated close-ups. Smith anticipated Méliès by several years with trick-film versions of *Cinderella* and *Faust*; and seems, in general, to have been far in advance of the entire world in the techniques of those early days. Since Warwick distributed Méliès' films in this country, Smith was in fairly close touch with the French master. He revealed a year or so ago that he even directed one of Méliès' films, *Le Sacre de Edouard VII*.

From about 1900 he applied his inventive brilliance to the problems of colour cinematography, and in 1906 patented Kinemacolor. He was awarded a medal of the Royal Society of Arts for his work; and he and Urban exploited the system commercially, with great success, for several years. The simplicity and ingenuity of the process were still as striking when it was demonstrated a year or so ago to the British Film Academy, who had made Mr. Smith an Honorary Fellow.

His last public appearance was at the opening of the new National Film Theatre, in October, 1957. He was then a splendid 93, with thick, curly, white hair and a face bronzed by his daily walk on the front at Brighton. He was marvellously alert; his curiosity was undiminished. He quite enjoyed the show and was loud in his criticism of the pictorial quality of some fragment of film shot 60 years before. He wanted to know about the making of everything, from the latest plastics to door knobs and puddings. He adored television. One could still see all the quality which had made him a great inventor.

## Correspondence

### The Technique of Animation

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—With regard to the review by Richard Williams of our book *The Technique of Film Animation* in your last issue, he commented that "nowhere does the book give the feeling of excitement and adventure in this wide open, lively medium. There is no sense given of the close collaboration which can exist within the studio set-up—of people sparking each other off and of the terrific inventiveness in all departments, let alone the individual worker firing off in an unexplored direction. And, for heaven's sake, where is the humour in the whole business?"

The one thing we emphasised again and again is this very point of the animation team, and how those concerned in creating the story, the storyboard and the final animation itself, should let the work grow as they share the creative process together. The kind of

very simple instructional book for which Mr. Williams is asking was published by Focal Press some years ago—*How to Cartoon* by John Halas and Bob Privett.

We explained in our introduction to *The Technique of Film Animation* that, in common with the other volumes in the British Film Academy-Focal Press series, we were not setting out to write another how-to-do-it book, but a how-it-is-done book. We surveyed the whole field of animation in all the forms it has taken after fifty years of both conventional and experimental work, and we discussed both the technical and artistic principles which have been revealed.

A book dealing with all forms of animation must attempt to elucidate, however inadequately, the principles involved, and these are not, as Mr. Williams states, all that easy. We are sorry if this does not always make gay or simple reading, and we are sorry too that we have not tried to make the book as funny to read as a good comedy cartoon is to look at. It never seemed to us to be our job to tell other people how to be funny! It was, in fact, as we have said, to explain the very varied techniques that the past fifty years of animation have produced, and to bring together the views of many prominent animators in all branches of the art on their own work, and on the ever-widening range of uses to which animation can be put.

Yours faithfully,

Halas and Batchelor Cartoon Films Ltd.,  
Lysbeth House, Soho Square,  
London, W.1.

JOHN HALAS  
ROGER MANVELL.

### Lament from the Middle West

SIR,—How frustrating it is to read the reports in SIGHT AND SOUND, or in any of the European film magazines, about films—exciting films, upsetting films, good, bad, hot, cold, in the pot nine days old films—finished and shown, sometimes years ago, which we in this section of the States will probably never see. Never, that is, unless some revolutionary filmic plan takes over in Chicago. So many articles on the *nouvelle vague*! So many names like Camus, Truffaut, Resnais, Visconti, Wajda! So many films like *Orfeu Negro*, *Hiroshima mon Amour*, *Il Tetto*, *La Terra Trema*! And where are the films themselves? For me, and others like me in the Middle West, they are in Rome, Paris, London, and occasionally New York. Oh, once in a while one of the local "Art" houses imports a worthy film—currently *Wild Strawberries* is in town, to catch on to the Ingmar Bergman gravy train; and once in a while a Masina film will play because *La Strada* was big news; or a Magnani film shows up. But in such miserly dribbles! *Gate of Hell* was practically the last Oriental import I can remember. And *Room at the Top*, good as it is, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, shrewdly timed for American release as it was (and terribly dull at that), are not enough. Nor is the promise that *Les Sorcières de Salem*, advertised for a year, will eventually show up—to catch on to the Signoret gravy train!

We have no policy here of showing the best films from around the world. It's hit or miss, depending on how commercial such a booking might seem. Commerce is important, of course, but I wonder if there aren't enough died-in-the-wool film fans to keep some of the great films around for at least a week or two to allow at any rate a token view of what is going on outside of Hollywood and make a profit?

But there is no way other than haphazardly for Chicago to see what is after all the major expression of art of our time: the Film. Till the day when there are steady local releases of global films, couldn't you please, somehow, manage to make your reviews, comments and discussions of what we may never see a little less interesting?

Yours faithfully,

1007 N. Rush Street,  
Chicago 11, Illinois,  
U.S.A.

MARK STERN.

### South African Cinema

SIR,—I am collecting material for a book on the history of the cinema in South Africa.

If any of your readers have relevant material such as letters, posters, handbills, MSS, photographs, reviews, press cuttings or personal recollections—especially on newsreels and "faked" films during the South African War (1899–1902), I shall be very grateful to receive them. All original documents will be carefully kept, copied and returned.

Yours faithfully,

c/o English-Speaking Union,  
Dartmouth House,  
37 Charles Street,  
London, W.1.

PIETER GERMISHUYS.



## THE TEENAGE RAVE

(continued from page 30)

in families that have no communication system. There is no subtlety, no feeling other than comic impatience or incomprehension dissolving into rosy-hued sentimentality.

Yet it can be bridged, this gulf between the generations, even when it is as silent, wide and glacial as the family dinner table in *The Young Stranger*. Seen again in perspective, with *Rebel* in the Dean-obscured distance and *Blue Jeans* in the foreground, Frankenheimer's sensitive account of an uneasy parent-child relationship seems more of a minor masterpiece than ever. And if Hollywood has any hopes of restoring to young people the enthusiasms it has helped to crush and the visions it has so often corrupted, then the genuine optimism, sense of proportion and youthful approach of *The Young Stranger* seem the best way to do it. But there are vested interests on both sides who would prefer that the gulf remained. It is much easier to make pictures within the circumscribed limits of the supposed teenage cult than really to look at the problems, dispassionately, from all sides. And teenagers themselves—the people Colin MacInnes is concerned to write about in his novel *Absolute Beginners*, the boys on the continent who have recently been staging their own *Wild One* motor-cycle raids—find comfort and satisfaction in the illusion that their world is their own, and private.

One of the most striking features of the nineteen-fifties has been the way in which this concept of teenage society as a sub-culture has spread from the original Hollywood image to almost every country in the world. The European adolescent, like his screen image, is Hollywood-influenced, yet he still has an identity of his own. He will be the subject of a sequel to this article in the next issue.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

#### Stills:

UNITED ARTISTS for *The Fugitive Kind*, *The Horse Soldiers*, *On The Beach*.  
20th CENTURY-FOX for *The Long Hot Summer*, *Compulsion*, *The Story on Page One*, *Sing, Boy, Sing*.  
COLUMBIA PICTURES for *Our Man in Havana*, *Gidget*.  
WARNER-PATHE DISTRIBUTORS for *Crime and Punishment*, *U.S.A.*, *A Summer Place*, *The James Dean Story*.  
METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER for *High School Confidential!*, *The Devil is a Sissy*, *Home from the Hill*, *A Night at the Opera*, *The Cameraman*.  
PARAMOUNT for *That Kind of Woman*.  
CONTEMPORARY FILMS for *The Face*, *The Burmese Harp*.  
GALA FILM DISTRIBUTORS for *Hiroshima mon Amour*.  
HOLLY PRODUCTIONS for *The Entertainer*.  
UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL for *Three Smart Girls*.  
NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE for *Our Hospitality*, *The Young Stranger*.  
ARCHWAY FILM DISTRIBUTORS for *Persons Unknown*.  
FILMS OF POLAND for *Lotna*, *Farewells*.  
HUNGAROFILM for *The House under the Rocks*, *Yesterday*, *The Smugglers*, *Sleepless Years*, *For Whom the Larks Sing*.  
COMPAGNIE JEAN RENOIR for *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*.  
ARGENTINA SONOFILM for *House of the Angel*.  
AGNES DELAHAYE PRODUCTIONS for *The Pickpocket*.  
INTERWEST FILM for *Endstation Liebe*.  
MONDIAL FILMS for *Les Amants*.  
SHOCHIKU for *Higanbana*.  
GRUZIA FILM, TBILISI for *Somebody Else's Children*.  
LES FILMS DE LA PLEIADE-CAHIERS DU CINEMA for photograph of Alain Resnais.  
FILMS MARCEAU for *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*.  
AUSTRALIAN NEWS AND INFORMATION BUREAU for photograph of Fred Zinnemann and Robert Mitchum.  
ASSOCIATED-REDIFFUSION for *Dragnet*, *The Deputy*.  
BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION for *The Third Man*.

### CORRESPONDENTS

U.S.A.: Albert Johnson SCANDINAVIA: Erik Ulrichsen  
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SOLE AGENTS for U.S.A.: Eastern News Company, 306 West 11 Street, New York.

PRINTED BY Brown Knight & Truscott Ltd., London, England.

BLOCKS BY W. F. Sedgwick Ltd., London.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES (4 issues), 16s. including postage.

U.S.A.: \$3. Price per copy in United States, 75 cents.

PUBLICATION DATES: 1st January, 1st April, 1st July and 1st October.

Overseas Editions: 12th of these months.

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22nd day of October, 1959. P. W. Jones (a Commissioner for Oaths).



# A GUIDE TO CURRENT FILMS

Films likely to be of special interest to *SIGHT AND SOUND* readers are denoted by one, two or three stars

- \*AMANTS, LES** (*Mondial*) Louis Malle's story of innocence and passion in a country house full of superficial sophisticates; technically promising, well-acted by Jeanne Moreau and Alain Cuny, but lacking the intensity and precision of imagination needed to raise it above the level of the merely chic. (Dyaliscope.)
- \*ANATOMY OF A MURDER** (*Columbia*) Otto Preminger's long, sensational and slick courtroom drama about rape and murder, adapted from an outspokenly physiological best-seller, and acted by James Stewart, Lee Remick, Ben Gazzara, and Boston lawyer Joseph N. Welch as the judge.
- BABETTE GOES TO WAR** (*Columbia*) Brigitte Bardot as a secret service agent in a hazardous attempt at Occupation comedy. Lively to start with, but finally flags. (Jacques Charrier, Ronald Howard, Francis Blanche; director, Christian-Jaque. CinemaScope, Eastman Colour.)
- BEST OF EVERYTHING, THE** (*Fox*) A cautionary tale for the wide-eyed career girl straight from college; frustration, abortion, insanity, Joan Crawford as the scourge of the typing pool, all given the full Jerry Wald treatment. (Hope Lange, Louis Jourdan, Stephen Boyd; director, Jean Negulesco. CinemaScope, DeLuxe Color.)
- BUT NOT FOR ME** (*Paramount*) Frail back-stage comedy based on Samson Raphaelson's *Accent on Youth*, devotedly nursed back to health by Lee J. Cobb, Lilli Palmer, Clark Gable and Carroll Baker. (Director, Walter Lang.)
- CAREER** (*Paramount*) Still back-stage, but this time not even Shirley MacLaine and Carolyn Jones can save this awful warning to the stagestruck from death by cliché. (Anthony Franciosa, Dean Martin; director, Joseph Anthony.)
- CHARMANTS GARÇONS** (*Connoisseur*) Five men and Lulu, a cabaret star. Elegant, empty sex comedy, with Zizi Jeanmaire and Daniel Gélin providing the few bright moments. (François Périer, Henri Vidal, Jacques Dacqmine; director, Henri Decoin. Eastman Colour.)
- \*CRIME AND PUNISHMENT—U.S.A.** (*A.B.-Pathé*) Terry and Denis Sanders' first full-length film. Yet another interpretation of Dostoevsky's classic, and predictably a misfire, but its frenetic Californian beach-town setting, the strangeness of the handling and George Hamilton's striking personality all carry weight. (Mary Murphy, Frank Silvera.) *Reviewed.*
- DESERT MICE** (*Rank*) Farce about a third-rate ENSA company's wartime adventures. A good idea and a talented cast thrown away on a lazy and boorish script. (Alfred Marks, Dick Bentley, Sidney James; director, Michael Relph.)
- \*EPIC HERO AND THE BEAST** (*Gala*) Soviet fantasy-spectacle about the warrior Ilya Muromets, and his invincible way with multi-headed, fire-breathing serpents, treacherous Tsars and entire armies of foes. Extremely grand, even at its most absurd. (Boris Andreyev, Andrei Abrikosov; director, Alexander Ptushko. Sovcolour, SovScope.)
- \*EXPRESSO BONGO** (*British Lion*) Resolute British attempt at a topical musical, very post-Wolfenden Report (and *Room at the Top*) in tone yet somehow dated and self-conscious. Good moments from Cliff Richard and Meier Tzelniker. (Laurence Harvey, Sylvia Syms, Yolande Donlan; director, Val Guest. Dyaliscope.) *Reviewed.*
- FBI STORY, THE** (*Warners*) Mainly the cosy home life of an agent (James Stewart) grown grey in the Bureau's service, interlaced with terse and sometimes violently jingoistic re-enactments of actual cases. (Vera Miles; director, Mervyn LeRoy. Technicolor.)
- FIVE PENNIES, THE** (*Paramount*) Danny Kaye as cornetist "Red" Nichols, a well-known bandleader of the '20s, in a heavily heroic and sentimental life story enlivened by Louis Armstrong and some good Dixieland jazz. (Barbara Bel Geddes, Bob Crosby; director, Melville Shavelson. VistaVision, Technicolor.)
- \*GIGI** (*M-G-M*) Colette's little fairy tale of the *demimonde*, with Lerner-Loewe lyrics and score, Cecil Beaton décor and Minnelli at his most consciously decorative. Always charming to look at, and sometimes to listen to. (Leslie Caron, Louis Jourdan, Maurice Chevalier, Hermione Gingold. CinemaScope, Metrocolor.)
- \*GIRL ROSEMARIE, THE** (*Small*) Hard-hitting West German account of a blackmailing prostitute involved with industrialists and political corruption. Reminiscent of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, intriguing both in its social criticism and its style, but ultimately questionable. (Nadja Tiller, Peter Van Eyck; director, Rolf Thiele.) *Reviewed.*
- \*\*\*HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR** (*Gala*) Alain Resnais' experiment with time, memory and forgetfulness, in which a love affair in Hiroshima brings back a wartime love in Nevers. Lyrical film-making by a precision artist, and as obsessive as anything we are likely to see in 1960. (Emmanuelle Riva, Eiji Okada.)
- \*\*HORSE SOLDIERS, THE** (*United Artists*) John Ford's five million dollar version of Grierson's *Raid* through Confederate territory during Grant's advance on Vicksburg. Wonderfully composed battle scenes, the old mixture of roughhouse and spasmodic romance, and a more serious view of the war itself. (John Wayne, William Holden, Constance Towers, Althea Gibson. DeLuxe Color.) *Reviewed.*
- \*\*\*IVAN THE TERRIBLE (PART TWO)** (*Contemporary*) Eisenstein's last film; even more magnificent than Part One. (Nikolai Cherkasov, Seraphina Birman, Piotr Kodochnikov.)
- LIBEL** (*M-G-M*) Agonisingly well-bred version of 25-year-old melodrama about a baronet with amnesia and a double, shrewdly caricatured by Robert Morley and Wilfrid Hyde White as a couple of histrionic barristers. (Dirk Bogarde, Olivia de Havilland, Paul Massie; director, Anthony Asquith.)
- \*ON THE BEACH** (*United Artists*) Stanley Kramer's screen version of the Neville Shute best-seller about existence after the H-Bomb. Clearly intended as an exhortatory document, but with so many false emphases that romance still contrives to triumph. (Gregory Peck, Ava Gardner, Fred Astaire, Anthony Perkins.) *Reviewed.*
- \*\*OUR MAN IN HAVANA** (*Columbia*) Carol Reed's new film, scripted by Graham Greene from his novel: distinguished, but not quite quick or flexible enough. Stylish performance by Noël Coward as a breezily incompetent spy. (Alec Guinness, Burl Ives, Ernie Kovacs, Maureen O'Hara. CinemaScope.) *Reviewed.*
- \*\*PERSONS UNKNOWN** (*Archway*) Despite the slowing-down effect of some romantic by-play, this joke at the expense of *Rififi* is frequently outrageously funny, and gets brilliant acting from Vittorio Gassman, Memmo Carotenuto and Totò. (Renato Salvatori, Marcello Mastroianni; director, Mario Monicelli.) *Reviewed.*
- \*ROYAL BALLET, THE** (*Rank*) Paul Czinner's record, shot on the stage of the Royal Opera House, of *Swan Lake* (Act Two), *The Firebird* and *Ondine*. In some ways an improvement on his Bolshoi film, but let down by *Ondine's* libretto. (Eastman Colour.) *Reviewed.*
- \*SAVAGE EYE, THE** (*Contemporary*) Corrosive, often fascinating camera record of disillusioned and discontented souls in Los Angeles, unwisely latched on to a philosophical allegory about an unhappy young woman coming to terms with life, and ruined by a phoney-poetic commentary. (Barbara Baxley; directors, Ben Maddow, Sidney Meyers, Joseph Strick.) *Reviewed.*
- SOLOMON AND SHEBA** (*United Artists*) A cheerfully incongruous distortion of Biblical history, less brutal than most but just as dull. (Yul Brynner, Gina Lollobrigida, George Sanders; director, King Vidor. Super Technirama 70, Technicolor.)
- SOUTH PACIFIC** (*Fox*) High, wide and generally unhandsome version of the stage musical, stodgily directed by Joshua Logan. Happily the songs survive from a welter of eccentric colour effects and jungle décor. (Rossano Brazzi, Mitzi Gaynor, John Kerr. Todd-AO, Technicolor.)
- SOUTH SEAS ADVENTURE** (*Cinerama*) Two girls voyage from Los Angeles to Honolulu, taking in surf-riding, Tahiti, Queen Salote's tortoise, Fiji, manhood-initiation rites in the New Hebrides, Maoris and Bondi Beach life guards. One or two pretty views barely compensate for the sense of strain. (Commentary by Orson Welles; various directors. Cinerama, Technicolor.)
- STRANGLERS OF BOMBAY, THE** (*Columbia*) A flea-bitten Hammer Horror masquerading as a serious study of thuggee; unimaginatively unconvincing and very beastly indeed. (Guy Rolfe, Allan Cuthbertson, Andrew Cruickshank; director, Terence Fisher. MegaScope.)
- THEY CAME TO CORDURA** (*Columbia*) Glendon Swarthout's investigation into courage and cowardice undergoes Hollywood's best-seller treatment, with a cavalry charge, a trek through the desert, sadism and a psycho-analytical sauce. (Gary Cooper, Rita Hayworth, Van Heflin, Tab Hunter; director, Robert Rossen. CinemaScope, Technicolor.)
- THIRD MAN ON THE MOUNTAIN** (*Walt Disney*) Alpine adventure yarn for boys, elementary in its plot and mountain heroics, but James MacArthur's hero is wholesome and Harry Waxman's Technicolor photography handsome. (Michael Rennie, James Donald, Herbert Lom; director, Ken Annakin.)
- TOMMY THE TOREADOR** (*Warner-Pathé*) Tolerable Tommy Steele vehicle, with the star still the least synthetic and most relaxed of the pop singers. (Janet Munro, Sidney James; director, John Paddy Carstairs.)
- \*VICIOUS CIRCLE** (*Mondial*) Jacqueline Audry's version of Sartre's *Huis Clos* dissipates some of the original claustrophobia, but is still intelligent and amusing in its intentionally theatrical way. (Arletty, Frank Villard, Gaby Sylvia.) *Reviewed.*
- \*WE DIE ALONE** (*Renown*) The World War II saga of Jan Baalsrud, a Norwegian who spent over a month in open snow escaping the Nazis, recorded with intelligence and restraint. (Jack Fjeldstad; director, Arne Skouen.)

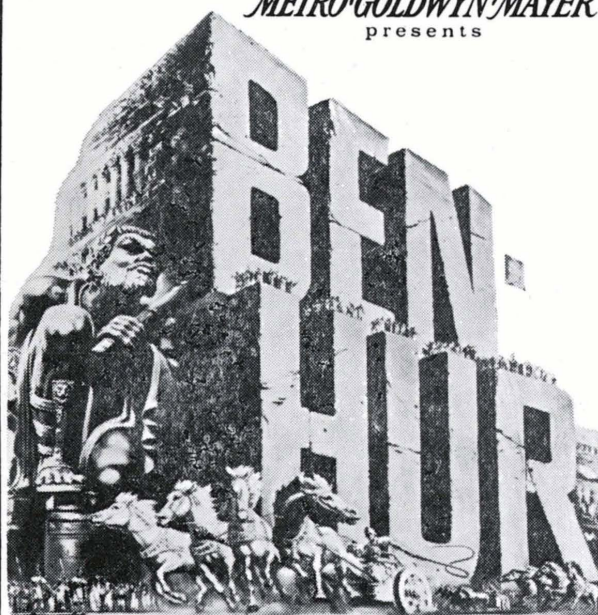


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